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Missionary of unconsciousness

John Clive

FRED KAPLAN
Thomas Carlyle: A Biography
614pp. Cambridge University Press. £29.75.
08014 1508X

Once safely past a certain age, iconoclasts and prophets, particularly in England, tend to become national possessions; beloved heirlooms to be cosseted, celebrated, and indulged. What happened to GBS and is now happening to Malcolm Muggeridge - will it, could it possibly ever happen to E.P. Thompson? - happened earlier to Thomas Carlyle. Fred Kaplan describes how, within the space of a few years after growing a beard - in 1854, aged fifty-nine - he was sought after by commercial photographers, and though in reality still often angry and unhappy, was generally regarded as a "wise, sad, and even gentle man with deep resources of spirit through whose special powers of insight truths that transcended the passing moment had been revealed". It wasn't all on account of the beard, either. His *Collected Works* appeared (1857-8) and duly authenticated his status as a Victorian sage. He had to wait a few more years for the chance of defining a knighthood. That came in 1874 when he was made an offer of one by Disraeli, at the suggestion of Lord Derby, who felt it would be a good political investment; since the putative recipient was "for whatever reason very vehement against Gladstone".

The privileges accorded to the aged usually cease with, or shortly after, their demise. Today, plenty of people are "very vehement" against Carlyle; and some of the reasons for that lie to hand in Mr Kaplan's biography. His celebration of the virtues embodied by that Teutonic heritage of valour and intellect which he considered to be the crucial element in English history and culture; his anti-democratic outbursts in *Letter-Day Pamphlets* - Trollope remarked, after reading the first of them that he had long looked on the author "as a man who was always in danger of growing mad in literature and who has now done so"; the attitude of "white supremacy" displayed in his "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question" (1849); his stand in favour of Governor Eyre's merciless suppression of black insurrection in Jamaica (1865); his characterization two years later of the Second Reform Bill as "Shooting Niagara" - these attitudes and views are hardly such as to gain him unanimous praise in the late twentieth century. And while Kaplan does his best to put them into perspective, and to correct misinterpretations still widely current, neither he nor anyone else can succeed in making them really palatable to present-day readers.

Not that Kaplan attempts to do that. Indeed, one of the many virtues of his biography is his acceptance throughout of the fact that in the course of a long life-time Carlyle said and did many foolish, inconsistent, and embarrassing things. Critics both of his ideas and of his personal life in search of more ammunition may find plenty of it in this book. One example must suffice here. Kaplan duly notes that while being lavishly entertained by Bingham and Lady Harriet Baring (they became Lord and Lady Ashburton in 1848) at their small villa at Addiscombe (1844), Carlyle's "usual criticism of idle aristocracy was suspended". At that very time his wife Jane, nervous and depressed, as well as intensely jealous of her husband's infatuation with Lady Harriet, was styling with friends of her own, trying to reconcile herself to being Carlyle's "necessary evil". This is what he then wrote to her: "Real good breeding, as the people have it here, is one of the careful things now going in the world. The careful avoidance of all discussion, the swift hopping from topic to topic, does not agree with me; but the graceful style they do it with is beyond that of minutes!" This from the author of *Chartism*.

Carlyle's marriage to Jane, his early life and loss of faith, and his ill health are three subjects familiar to anyone who has ever taken any interest in his life. And Kaplan's biography hardly emphasizes all three. His place and capacity of birth, Ecclefechan in Scotland, and the hard, relentless Calvinism of his parents, poor farmers making a sparse living from the soil shaped Carlyle's life beyond all other

forces. His childhood and youth were periods of continuous struggle - with school bullies, with sexual impulses that had to be repressed, with doubt and scepticism. His parents intended him for the ministry. But, with his faith fatally impaired, he renounced that vocation, with their reluctant acquiescence. Hume and Gibbon were the negative, Goethe and Schiller the positive poles of the intellectual influences acting upon him. But the moral imperatives of Ecclefechan - work, duty, the need to fight sin and the devil within and without - remained paramount.

Carlyle tried teaching, and came to hate it. He began to write for publication, with little success. But the important milestones of his early life-history were spiritual, not professional; internal crises which, when overcome, gave him strength and hope to go on, in spite of constant suffering and occasional despair. The first of these caused him to see his duty to lie not merely in thought and endurance, but in action as well. The second, the conversion experience so memorably described in *Sartor Resartus*, led him to seek and find a new source for confidence and inspiration, one to replace orthodox Christian belief. He found divinity within himself; and having done so, felt certain he could triumph over any obstacles, whether physical or intellectual, with which the external world might confront him. As Kaplan aptly puts it: "What religious belief had lost, personal will could provide." To be sure, one must not imagine that the immediate result of this experience was a totally changed human being who had now banished anxiety and depression for ever more. Difficulties remained, even after he proudly informed his mother, early in 1827, that he was writing a book; though "only" a novel. The novel, "Wotton Reinfred", remained uncompleted.

It was not until almost seven years later that that idiosyncratic work of genius, *Sartor Resartus*, began to appear in instalments in *Fraser's Magazine*. When Carlyle had first offered it to the proprietor, James Fraser, in 1831, under the original title of *Taufelsdrück*, Fraser had said he would publish it, but only on condition that the author pay him £150. Carlyle had kept his temper and had walked back to his London lodgings carrying the manuscript openly in his hand, "not like a gentleman". Soon thereafter, he almost gave up on the possibility of publication. "Dreck", he wrote to Jane at that time. In words that might equally well have been used by a contemporary sanitary reformer, "cannot be disposed of in London at this time."

"Dreck", in any event, was one of the dominant forces in Carlyle's life. What he referred to as his "bric-a-brac stomach" gave him trouble for years. Stomach pain, constipation, flatulence - he could never be sure whether they were the cause or the result of depression and despondency - were, a good deal of the time, part of his life. Ill health became as much of an enemy as idleness; and just as only strenuous work could extirpate the latter, strenuous medication had to be deployed against the former. "The horse laxatives", Kaplan writes, "made matters worse, irritating the intestines and punishing the erring spirit that had allowed itself to become sick." And what an undignified and humiliating sickness it was! "And do but think what a thing it is", Carlyle wrote to his brother Jack, a future doctor, in 1821, "that the ethereal [sic] spirit of a man should be overpowered and haggard by what? by two or three feet of sorry tripe full of -"

His health improved as he grew into middle age. There were periods, for example 1834-1841, when he had little to complain about. That those were also years of literary success for him, in particular with the reception of *The French Revolution* (1837), would not have struck him as mere coincidence. He was all too much aware of the connection between physical and psychological states. Indeed, in his Rectorial address at the University of Edinburgh (1866) he told the students: "If you are going to write a book, - you cannot manage it (at least, I never could), without getting decidedly made ill by it; and really you owe nevertheless must; if it is your business, you are obliged to follow out what you are at, and to do it, if even at the expense of health. Only remember, at all times, to get back as fast as possible out of

it into health." But while he himself got back into health, that of Jane deteriorated. That, too, had roots in the mind as much as in the body.

The Carlyle marriage, between two people of enormous intelligence, talent, and sensibility, one of the most famous and certainly one of the most written-about marriages of the nineteenth century, had come under a good deal of strain from the start. Carlyle's marital credo, which he detailed to Jane just a few months before the wedding - it included the sentence, "It is the nature of a woman . . . (for she is essentially passive not active) to cling to the man for support and direction, to comply with his humours, and feel pleasure in doing so, simply because they are his; to reverence while she loves him, to conquer him not by her force but by her weakness" - did not hold well. The wedding night, in quote Kaplan, proved "abysmal". There seems no reason to dispute his conclusions, that "sexual intercourse played little or no role in the routine of their relationship during almost forty years of marriage".



Moreover, Jane had to compete with two other women close to Carlyle: one was his mother Margaret to whom he remained deeply devoted during her long lifetime. What he wrote in his last of many letters to her, a few months before her death in 1853, was genuinely felt: "If there has been any good in the things I have uttered in this world's hearing, it was your voice essentially that was speaking thro' me; essentially, what you and my brave father meant and taught me to mean, this was the purport of all I wrote and spoke." Not surprisingly, perhaps, Jane did not take quite the same view of her mother-in-law. When in 1842, there arrived at 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea, where the couple had settled eight years before, an oil portrait of the elder Mrs Carlyle - "My good old Mother exactly as she looks", was her son's delighted reaction - she bridled at her husband's urgent proposal that the portrait be framed at once, and then installed directly over the drawing-room mantelpiece. "Not only", writes Kaplan, "were all her favourite mantelpiece ornaments to be scattered around the house but she was to have as a great looming presence in her living room the pervasive features of that dour matriarch." Jane's reaction speaks for itself: "I could never feel alone with that picture over me! I almost screamed at the notion." The portrait ended up in Carlyle's study.

Lady Harriet could not be similarly disposed of. Carlyle fell totally under her spell, visited her and her husband constantly at one or the other of their numerous country-houses, and wrote her letters of dogged devotion, some of which today's university students, confronted with anonymous texts by their examiners, might well attribute to D.H. Lawrence below top form. *Idem*: "Sunday, yes my Beneficent, it shall be then: the dark man shall again see the daughter of the Sun, for a little while; and be illuminated, as if he were not dark! which he very justly reckons among the highest privileges he has at present." *Idem*: "Employ me, do, order me this way of thing, it is all I am good for at present." See if I will not obey.

must kiss your hand." In fact, Lady Harriet never had the slightest intention of letting the kissing go beyond that region. But one can hardly blame Jane for becoming jealous and upset, nor for asking Giuseppe Mazzini, a friend who was far more sensitive to her emotional needs than her husband, whether or not to leave him. He advised her not to do so. She accepted his advice. And though, three years later (in 1849), her state of mind became such that she contemplated suicide, it would be rash to conclude that the Carlyle marriage was altogether unhappy. She rejoiced in the public recognition of the genius she always knew he possessed; while his tribute to her, delivered in a long, rambling, tear-filled monologue to Tyndal after her death (in 1866) was both authentic and well deserved: "He referred to the early days of his wife and himself - to their struggles against poverty and obstruction; to her valiant encouragement in hours of depression; to their life on the moors, in Edinburgh, and in London - how lovingly and loyally she had made of herself a soft cushion to protect him from the rude collisions of the world." That, indeed, had been her sacrifice.

Kaplan has very ably met the challenge, far from easy, of dealing with these crucial aspects of Carlyle's life - his loss of faith, his ill health, and his marriage. But the real contribution of his biography lies elsewhere. Unlike most previous biographers, he has no axe to grind. He is sympathetic to his subject, but at the same time does not let his judgments depend on any particular bias. He knows he is dealing with a complex personality, someone who has in the past been both over-praised, and condemned to excess; and that the time is ripe for getting away from those extremes. The result, to my mind, is a Carlyle who makes sense, a Carlyle we can accept.

Let me try to indicate some of the dimensions of this Carlyle. First of all, we must get out of our minds that image of the lonely, craggy, half-crazed prophet of doom, Carlyle *contra mundum*, which still tends to appear on our mental screens when his name is so much as casually mentioned. The book contains a photograph of him taken in July 1854, before he had grown his beard. He looks stern. His hair is grizzled. But, at fifty-nine, in spite of much ill health and many disappointments, his appearance communicates a handsome vigour more reminiscent of the somewhat dandified Molière engraving of 1832 and the romantic Samuel Laurence drawing (undated) than of the wonderful and justly famous photograph by Julia Margaret Cameron, taken when he was seventy-two, "in a very sensitive lens focused to produce an image of the literary artist as inspired seer".

Nor must we think of Carlyle as perpetually embattled, and therefore anti-social. As Kaplan points out, he had managed by the beginning of the 1840s to create a number of lifelong friendships: "Milnes, Sterling, Thackeray, Browning, Tennyson, Forster, Dickens, soon Edward Fitzgerald, and later John Ruskin" - together they wove a rich texture of experience, talent, achievement, and mutual affection which created a family connectiveness of the sort that Carlyle thought essential for human relations. "The vision of Carlyle in the wilderness might well apply to the years he and Jane spent on the moors, at Craigenputtock (1828-1831), but certainly not to the London Carlyle. Indeed, London is itself a sort of hidden hero of this biography. Time and again, Carlyle gets fed up with its noise, its crowding, its confusion and longs for the peace and quiet of his native Scotland. Yet, in the end, he is always drawn back to it, in part because it offers him the literary friendships he increasingly came to depend on.

It is, of course, undeniable that Carlyle's heightened rhetoric, infused with its peculiar flavour, a mixture of Calvinism, German idealism, and poetic metaphor, often evoked the understandable reaction, for example from devotees of clear-headedness and common sense like Macaulay, that his writings could only have emanated from the pen of a mystical madman. But the truth is that in some ways Macaulay, and Carlyle - each despised the other - were not at all dissimilar; especially in their respect for the concrete and the particular which, in the case of Carlyle, went along with his stylistic and philosophical extravagances.

Savaging and savagery

Rosemary Dinnage

ANTHONY WEST
Heritage
309pp. Seeker and Warburg. £8.95.
043656927

As the whole world knows by now, *Heritage* is a roman à clef. There is no mystery about it, and the key has been willingly offered, if not positively forced upon us by the author. The embarrassed reader who does not know where to look is firmly told in the introduction where to fix his eyes: on Anthony West's distinguished parents, Rebecca West and H. G. Wells. When he wrote this novel in the 1950s about his upbringing Rebecca West blacked its publication: all the portraits in it, including those of his parents' later partners and of his half-brothers and their wives, are to some degree unflattering. It was published in 1955 in the United States and now, Dame Rebecca having died at a great age, makes its delayed appearance here.

West makes himself extremely clear in his introduction. *Heritage*, he says, is a positively genial work in view of his mother's later behaviour. In this book he had chosen the name Savage for his hero, after the poet Johnson wrote about in his *Lives*, who was pursued almost to death by a monstrous mother. His own mother, he says, did not actually, like the Countess of Macclesfield, try to get him hanged. But from his puberty onwards her aim, he continues, was to "do me what hurt she could, and she remained set in that determination as long as there was breath in her body to sustain her malice". According to him, she blocked his career, made public scenes, tried to break up his marriage, tricked him out of his financial inheritance, and wrote hundreds of letters to people denouncing him.

There are passion and tragedy, therefore, behind the writing of this book, even if not adequately conveyed within it, and Savage is in a double sense an appropriate name for its central figure. Biographers will or will not eventually confirm the wretched record. In the meantime it is very hard to judge the book simply as a novel rather than a document, and perhaps we are hardly intended to do. It is, at the least, readable, adequately accomplished, and perhaps rather better than Rebecca West's own early fiction. It is doubtful if it would attract much attention, though, without its background.

Dickie Savage is five or six when the story opens, and living with his actress mother and Scottish nursemaid in a Kensington flat. The portrait of the mother, Naomi Savage, is insipid and one-dimensional; she is shallow, mendacious, and selfish, though sometimes indulgent, wedded to the theatre and to her private performances – a conventional maternal baddie. From the child's point of view she is mysterious and moody; their life is altogether a mystery to him, but although he has not been told who his father is there is no real attempt at representing the puzzle this would have been (in the novel Father appears for the first time

when the child is nine, while we know from published correspondence that in fact Wells was on the scene from the start).

Time, vague and structureless in this no-chapters novel, somehow passes and we find Dickie at prep school. On to the scene comes his father Max Town (H.G.W.) and his mistress Lolotte Gräfin Essling-Sterlinghoven (Odette Deun). Lolotte is a dreadfully un-English and embarrassing lady who kisses Dickie in full view, calls him a *Wunderkind*, and prattles of getting a little Essling-Sterlinghoven for herself ("no more contraception from now on, Max").

Dickie begins to spend much time in the delicious French ambience of his newly discovered father's flat in Paris and then villa in Provence. His parents are explained to him by a friend of the family:

You see they're both so wonderful at making up stories on the strength of a few facts that they don't very often pay very much attention to the humdrum sort of stories that most people live... They met, they fell in love, and they both made up wonderful stories about what the rest of their lives were going to be, and what the other person was like. And when they started living together they found how different the stories were, and how badly they fitted into each other's stories.

Lolotte, out of kindness, provides a pretty German girl to seduce the now teenage Dickie, and this gives him the confidence to confront the next parental whim, Naomi's marriage to a bluff and very rich colonel and her renunciation of the stage. It is not to last; the final shock is her deserting the colonel and going back to the stage. One result is that Dickie will be deprived of the estate in the country which the Colonel was going to leave him as surrogate son. But the ending shows something of the "geniality" which Anthony West now regrets; having written his parents out of his system he comes to a sort of reconciliation with them. Naomi, he tells his stepfather, can only be what she is. "She's been a loving mother, and an absolutely indifferent one who had a child by mistake, she's been a cold-hearted bully, and a wonderful friend. I wouldn't, now I'm not demanding that she always appear in a particular role, have her any different."

The author may well feel a kind of geniality at the solution that his fantasy account of his childhood provides for him. In three ways, at least, it changes the factual record (as a novel is of course entitled to do). First, it keeps his parents apart from the start. Second, it keeps his mother and stepfather apart too; Rebecca West did not in fact leave her much appreciated husband. Third, it deals with a basic issue that perhaps underlies much of the tragedy and savagery, the issue of abandonment and separation. We know that Anthony West was separated often and early from his mother; but in the novel it is not he who is abandoned but the Colonel. Naomi's crime is that she leaves people, but when the climactic leaving comes the son has the upper hand; he is the one to explain for his bereft stepfather. "It was not at all a bad thing to be 'at liberty' and free" is the concluding sentence. But sometimes it is.

Purgatorial pedagogy

Douglas Dunn

IAIN CRICHTON SMITH
Mr Trill in Hades and other stories
168pp. Gollancz. £7.95.
0575 034173

Today's school bully is unlikely to look like Flashman. He is more likely to resemble the complicated and psychotic thug of Ian Crichton Smith's tale "In the School". Deserted by his long-suffering cronies, and intent on arson, Terry in that story is prevented from putting a match to a paraffin-soaked classroom by a mass haunting of chalk-faced, begowned masters: "He looked up and he screamed and he screamed and he screamed."

In spite of its tumult and violence, the ending of "In the School" is supernaturally contrived. Reality may be too harsh and unaccommodating for quite so tidy a finale of poetic justice, especially on this subject – the evidence of newspapers and television documentaries suggests that Smith has avoided an intractable social problem with a literary flourish. It is a pity, for the story contains genuine insights into destructive character, the dependence on it of those less fulsomely delinquent, and their subsequent rejection of its malevolence.

Smith's sympathies appear to lie with traditional masters as much as with their bemused or demoting charges. "The Play", however, shows a teacher whose sympathies are actively on the side of a class of non-academic girls infatuated with pop music and hairdressing fantasies. While the story espouses their dignity, sorrow and vivacity, and those of their teacher, it tilts into sentimentality, modified here and there by hard-hitting scenes and sentences. Like the boys in "In the School", the girls in Mark's class "read between the lines though they couldn't read the lines themselves very well". Accepting that Mark's girls are not stupid is not enough, however, and the extent to which they jolt their teacher into a heightened understanding of the power of drama seems overdone.

The worry and suffering of teachers loom larger in this book than those of the pupils.

Final fling

Patricia Craig

CATHERINE HEATH
Behaving Badly
224pp. Capo. £7.95.
0224 029576

On page 146 of Cathorino Heath's new novel a minor character sits on a sofa in a work by Fay Weldon – significantly, *Remember Me*, in which, we remember, a jettisoned wife refuses to make the best of her new condition. No doubt this can be construed as a tribute from one author, whose characters exist in certain social circumstances, to another, who had already marked out those circumstances as her own particular territory. A redundant wife and an active one, the husband who ditched the former and took up the latter, the daughter busy cultivating independence in Battersea, the awful old Jewish grandmother laying plans in her attic – the cast-list from *Behaving Badly* might be said to reproduce the quintessential Weldon grouping.

Catherine Heath's manner, however, sadate and sardonic, doesn't resemble Weldon's at all; in this respect she's more akin to Elizabeth Taylor or Barbara Pym. There are other echoes. Her title surely constitutes a nod in the direction of Molly Keane, whose purpose – to construct social comedy out of a special code of conduct – is similar to her own. But Catherine Heath, for all the literary effects her novel recalls, is deft enough to modify this effect of her deliberate borrowings by superimposing on them a narrative mood entirely her own. It is compounded, in about equal measures, of frivolity and desperation.

The central character is Bridget, horse-faced and husbandless, who suddenly acquires an understanding of the ineffectiveness of good behaviour. If life lacks all interest, any change of circumstances can only be for the better. Bridget arrives at her own old home in Hamp-

"Greater Love", like "The Ring", tackles the suppression of private happiness as a consequence of too much bookishness and an obsessive dedication to teaching. In the first of these stories a veteran of two world wars sees it his duty to warn and prepare his pupils for a third, while "The Ring" is a beautifully observed and concise portrait of a deranged pedagogical romance seen through the eyes of a man grown to take his place in the profession of his unlovable teacher.

"Mr Trill in Hades", at eighty-five pages, is a vigorously sustained tale. Its knockabout debunking of myth and antiquity is engaging and on a higher plane than mere academic slapstick. At times, though, it wanders into bathos: "My name is Mr Trill, and I used to be a classic master at Eastbrough Grammar, Dido." Arch or comic? Whimsical or daring? There are moments when it is hard to tell which. Some passages, however, are only a little short of wonderful, as when Mr Trill meets Orpheus, who demystifies his legend with the counter-mystique of art and its necessary suffering, its "selfish passionate substance". His encounter with Sisyphus and Virgil also weight the balance of the story in favour of the more profound glamour of fiction than the earnest, schoolmasterly fun into which it is often in danger of falling. Trill's experience of Hades, through which he treks with his homely luggage, evokes the ordinariness of his cherished antiquity. It is all brought to bear remorselessly on Trill's humouless, selfish and asexual propensities. Aeneas's leavetaking of Dido, for instance, is paralleled with Mr Trill's deception of a former girlfriend in one of a series of lengthy flashbacks.

It is a powerful piece of writing which defends the values of antiquity as much as it domesticates them to the contemporary world. "The human soul", claims a disappointed, self-loathing Virgil, "that is what is important, the infinite tenderness." Mr Trill's re-education through the mouthpieces of Orpheus and the rest, conveyed often in imagery and turns of phrase characteristic of Iain Crichton Smith's poetry, cunningly and uncompromisingly subjects a character to exhausting self-scrutiny; Gilbert Finfold had an easier time of it.

stead, now occupied by her ex-husband Mark and his second wife Rebecca, and blithely establishes herself in the spare room. This is contrary to the wishes of everyone except Floda, the malevolent old mother-in-law who lives upstairs.

Farce is the proper mode to accommodate such doings; and the evening of Bridget's advent ends appropriately with a doctor arriving to minister to Mark's two wives, one with a broken foot and the other with a broken head. Bridget stays on until, the fun of the arrangement having begun to evaporate, she ousts her daughter Phyllida from her flat in Battersea and installs herself there instead. She isn't, in fact, the first dependent to make inconsiderate demands on a relative: the querulous grandfather of another young tenant is already in the spot, causing stinks and upsets.

Bridget takes charge of repellent Mr Redditch, while Phyllida, driven resentfully back to her father's house in Hampstead, becomes profitlessly infatuated with the black pastor of a church in Croydon. Unreconciled "Frieda", detester of her son's current wife, allows her thoughts to dwell pleasantly on the possibilities of Vodoo. Eventually, back in Battersea, the most often of Phyllida's young flatmate provides a focus for Bridget's newest and most extravagant enterprise.

All this, urbane and businesslike in the way it's set out, makes diverting reading. But it is also, in its more serious moments, reminds us of the therapeutic value of the final fling.

The tenth annual David Higham prize awarded for a first published novel or collection of short stories, will be presented in November this year. The judges are Nijl Bayden, A. S. Byatt and David Hughes and the closing date for entries is July 1. Further information is available from Sarah Morgan, National Book League, Book House, 45 East Hill, London SW18 2QJ.

Dialects of arcadia

George Steiner

JOHN BAYLEY
Selected Essays
217pp. Cambridge University Press.
£19.50 (paperback, £7.95).
0521 258286

The current state of literary criticism, of literary studies, is not easy to make out. At one extreme there are semiotic and "deconstructive" techniques which, more or less explicitly, aspire to philosophic radicalism and which have devised for themselves a range of special, sometimes esoteric, vocabularies. At the other extreme, there is the bulk of journalistic and periodical reviewing, of belletristic talk about books past and present. The conventions of this literary discourse have not greatly altered, except in formal spicuousness and elevation of tone, since the nineteenth century.

Between these extremes there is a bewildering variety of rhetorical and methodological modes. It includes the more or less straightforward historical, biographical, sociological commentary on writers and texts. Despite financial stringencies, such commentary continues to pour from academic presses and quality publishers. There is the sphere of literary and literary-philosophic essays addressed either to fellow-mentors or, hopefully, to a general literate public. One must add to this a veritable industry of textual summary and explication, of the pedagogical elucidation of "great" poetry, drama, fiction for the use of students, both at the university and secondary school levels. Meanwhile, editorial revision, philology, bibliography carry on along lines of pragmatic scruple already drawn by the scholars of Alexandria and the master-editors of the Renaissance.

Throughout this wide spectrum reciprocal notice and borrowings are, of course, active. Something of the structuralist, deconstructive and "grammatological" approach is filtering down to even the more conservative practices of university and high-journalistic literary criticism. The constant interplay between the academic lecture and the "elite" essay on the one hand, and the presentation of the same or closely related material and signatures by the media – the quality papers, the weeklies, the radio-talk – on the other, have produced hybrid forms. Viewed optimistically, these are instruments of a defended, even, it may be, of a widening literacy. Seen negatively, as they were by Leavis, these same forms dovalve language and sensibility to the profit of journalism. Heidegger's word was *Gerede*: the tidal wave of seemingly elevated chat. Yet across this whole spectrum of discursive tactics, two central areas or dimensions seem, at present, rare.

Of and by itself, literary criticism and the study of literature are secondary, parasitic, dependent means. By virtue of expressive strength and, usually, at the hands of those who are themselves major writers, certain commentaries on other men's poems, plays, novels, can become primary literature. Samuel Johnson on Shakespeare, Coleridge on Wordsworth in the *Biographia*, Proust on and against Sainte-Beuve, Mandelstam commenting on Dante, have passed into the canon. More infrequently, a treatise or meditation on literary theory or somebody of poetic work can be of such illumination and argued reach that it will endure in the philosophic syllabus, in epistemology and aesthetics. This would be the case with Aristotle's *Poetics*, with Hölderlin's expostions of Sophocles, with Walter Benjamin on baroque theatre or on Goethe's *Elective Affinities*. But in the vast majority of cases, the critic, the exegetist, the literary historian or biographer, operates in a wholly different dimension from that of the creative writer about whom he is speaking. Currently modish attempts to blur, to efface this fundamental distinction, to make of literary texts mere pretexts for secondary, interpretative discourse, are nonsense. They are nonsense formally as well as morally. Who would be the greatest of critics if he could be a poet who "makes the language live"?

Where literary criticism and study do transcend their inherent parasitic status, they do so by addressing themselves, via the primary text,

to the principal political, philosophic, social issues of their time. They speak of and to the centre in our historical circumstance. It is precisely this focus which marks the stature, the life-force of the writing about writings in Matthew Arnold, in Edmund Wilson, in Sartre, in Lionel Trilling at his best. Can we, today, match these voices from the centre?

A second lack is closely related to this question. Where, except in the masked, oblique claims of deconstruction, do we find authentic, fruitful ironies and doubts as to the entire enterprise? How many among our academic and literary pundits dare ask what it is they are really doing, or of what import as the loud proliferations of jargon and gloss, of byzantine professionalism, of in-house tempests? Both in academia and in *belles-lettres*, be they "deconstructively post-modern" or rancorously traditional, a note of complacent solipsism, of isolation from self-questioning, is unmistakable.

Amid these prodigal claims and abdications, John Bayley's stance is distinctive but not readily definable. He is very much the Warton Professor of English at Oxford, whose unforced criteria of reference are learned, who aims his argument at his professional peers (Heinrich Heine, Harold Bloom). But though he has written finely on Chaucer, Shakespeare and Thomas Hardy, his best hook to date is a monograph on Pushkin, and it is Russian and American poetry which seem to engage him most intensely. Professor Bayley is, in the true sense, a comparatist, a reader who finds the native ground under persistent influence, pressure, contrastive illumination from other tongues and traditions. He deeply distrusts the present-day "mystery of jargon", the would-be enforcement on our visceral experience of literature of pseudo-systematic imperatives of

interpretation or non-interpretation. He knows what plummy arrogance is entailed by the proposition, emitted not very long ago by a Yale luminary, that it has become more interesting and significant to read Derrida on Rousseau than to read Rousseau. Bayley's own idiom is, however, highly self-conscious and, at times, recherché. We learn of "a medium as equal to startlement as it was at home in depths of equivocation"; of Vermeer's "intensification into pearly strangeness of domestic conditioning"; of "the general bosom's response" to familiar novelties. Moreover, in an anislogm characteristic of the current climate, this collection consists of short papers and book reviews (all but nine previously published) composed with erudite, oblique refinement, written academically, but issued in the daily press, the weeklies or the salient London and New York literary reviews. The attendant acrobatic strain is both exhilarating and inhibiting.

Bayley proceeds from cardinal divisions. Literature lends us either into the story or into the being of the story-teller (sometimes, as in Keats, who is, with Pushkin, the abiding touchstone, poetry "has it with ways"). The mirth of Auden in this "post-romantic age" consists precisely in the lively reach of interests in "the plural aspects and manifestations of the world". In Wallace Stevens, Montale or Joyce, we observe "the slow, painful exploratory process which results in the organic creation". By sharp contrast, Auden is a "scold or court poet, lead man in a team, the nunnery again being with modern activities like physics or filmmaking". Contrastively, there are the great "primary poets" like Shakespeare and Pushkin with "their omnivorous intuitive intelligence" and poets such as Blok and Yeats who require

the "stimulus of ideas and mystic theories that could be turned into poetic metaphor". To grasp the difference between Akhmatova's poetry and that of other masters, we must distinguish "religion" from "conscience". Religion "does not come over in poetry but conscience, its precursor and attendant, can and does".

At their best, these groupings and disjunctions produce arresting, subtly persuasive insights. "For Keats, as for many other nineteenth-century imaginations, sex was a fairy world that vanished in consummation. Larkin in his own way inherits the tradition, inherits, too, its legacy of disillusion." When polarities begin to converge, Bayley's criticism is at its most incisive. Consciously or not, there is a touch of self-depiction in a remark on Wallace Stevens:

The most important thing about Wallace Stevens' poetry is that it seems fastidious, deeply pondered, idiosyncratically exclusive; but that it is really cooperative, communal, impressionistic and sketchy, a mild show-off before persons who, like those in local church or lecture-hall, are already *au fait* with the preacher's tone.

Brief, occasional as they are, Bayley's reviews of John Betjeman, of Larkin, of the early Auden, of Akhmatova, of Blok, of Tsvetayeva, produce readings of living, closely-observant authority.

Elsewhere, this darting, humming-bird visitation of texts and of authors lacks purchase. A drastic misquotation of Mallarmé coincides with a general perfunctoriness in regard to French literature. The notices on Canetti and on Milosz are hurried (to cite just one point: as we know from Fondano and Jean Wahl, Shestov did know his Kierkegaard, the problem being only one of chronology). Even in the more considered articles, pluriotics can end in confusion. What meaning can one attach to the proposition "Mandelstam and Akhmatova, whom history had made greater poets than Blok or Yeats"? Passing ostentation, not any felt pressure of critical and personal assessment, seems to lie behind the verdict that Auden's translations from the eight songs in *Mother Courage* are "as superior to Brecht as the songs in Pushkin's *Fest in Time of Plague* are superior to their prototypes in John Wilson's *City of the Plague*" – a magisterial ruling made the more damaging by an attendant sneer at Brecht's presumably teutonic "profound seriousness". (With very few exceptions, Brecht's stature as a lyric poet is still *terra incognita* in English awareness.)

A politics of liberal irony and compassion is implicit in Bayley's poetics. Things Russian spellbind his heart and mind. If, at one point, and in an image which seems somewhat thoughtless, he sees Russian literature as having been led "into the Soviet gas chamber", he will, at other moments, marvel at its continued, unbroken vitality. A patient politics, furthermore, is at work in Professor Bayley's understanding of the differences and affinities between English and American modes of social, linguistic and personal experience. But the open ground on which the life of literature meets with conditions of politics in our society, is touched on only by implication (there is one delightfully waspish stab at Mr Wedgwood Benn's "feigned meekness").

Nor is there any explicit questioning of whether, of the possible ways in which, literary discourse about literature, "the critic's job of work" as R. P. Blackmur, a nervous, haunted self-questioner, called it, matters, matters at all. Hence the somewhat complex sensation left by this collection: of both a great openness to poetry in its most diverse, most non-parochial appeal and exigence, and of a guarded enclosure, of an echo-chamber inhabited, principally, by fellow-practitioners of the dialects of arcadia.

Thomas Hardy Annual No.2 edited by Norman Page (261pp. Macmillan, £25.00 333 34157 0), published this month, contains twelve new essays, reviews of some recent books of Hardy scholarship and criticism, a survey of studies and a Hardy bibliography for 1981-2. Among the contributors are Peter J. Casagrande, Ronald P. Draper, Simon Gaiell, Ian Gregor and Michael Irwin, Arlene M. Jackson, J. T. Laird, Harold Orel, Richard H. Taylor and Merryn Williams.

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R. B. WERNHAM
After the Armada: Elizabethan England and
the Struggle for Western Europe 1588-1595
613pp. Oxford University Press. £32.50.
0198227531

It was blowing a gale in Dover Roads on the morning of 27 August 1588 and aboard his flagship, the *Ark Royal*, Lord Admiral Howard was in an unusually testy mood. . . .
So starts R. B. Wernham's new study of English foreign policy, at almost exactly the same moment that his previous volume (*Before the Armada*, 1966) left off. By page 180 we have reached the end of 1589; on page 460 we end the year 1592; on page 554, at a rather more rapid pace, we reach February 18, 1595 and the end of the tale. This is history on the grand scale, seldom now seen in these days of austerity among publishers. Professor Wernham's book is still slimmer than the last full-scale account of this period - E. P. Cheyney, *The History of England from the Defeat of the Armada to the Death of Elizabeth I*, published in 1914 - but it is more sharply focused. Wernham has a case to prove. First he wishes to overthrow the current assumption that the naval campaigns of Elizabeth's brave sailors and bold captains constituted the major part of her war effort against Spain; this volume establishes beyond question that most naval operations in these years were rather ineffective side-shows. The main thrusts - and the main costs - all occurred on the continent: in Picardy, Normandy, Brittany and the Netherlands. It was here that the majority of the 48,000 English soldiers sent abroad during these years fought (and often died); here too that the bulk of the £1.1 million spent on war was expended.

The magnitude of England's commitment to the war against Spain may seem surprising, and Wernham uses his striking figures to make two further points. First, they sustain his argument that the post-Armada period represents the crucial phase in the struggle for hegemony in western Europe; despite the defeat of Spain's great fleet, Wernham insists, Philip II came within 93 ac of gaining control of France in 1589-93. Had he done so, both England and the Dutch Republic must surely have been overwhelmed in their turn. That was why the parsimonious Queen spent so prodigiously in support of her allies - and to good effect. According to Wernham, without Elizabeth's men, ships and money, France and the Netherlands would have fallen. The cost of this prolonged effort was, however, crippling. The mounting burdens and frustrations of two war

were gradually translated into discontent among the Queen's subjects. One of the sub-themes in the book is the growth of hostile opinion and sentiment towards the government, on account of the war, which culminated in the stormy Parliament of 1593.

The focus of this book then, in all its detail, is resolutely English. The author, by his own admission, "tries to see the struggle for western Europe primarily as it may have appeared to Queen Elizabeth and her advisers rather than from some stratospheric international point of view". Actually, Wernham has little time for the "advisers". He passes over in silence the ordent debate conducted in court circles during these years over the correct war strategy to be followed. But perhaps he would argue that this debate did not matter. For him, foreign policy was "largely the story of day-to-day responses to the immediate pressure of events and circumstances". There was little time to shape a more general strategy. Certainly, some days were incredibly hectic. On April 8, 1589, for example, the postman brought nothing but bad news. First, the Queen's ambassador in France sent urgent requests from King Henry for money; then news came in that the garrison of the strategic Netherlands city of St. George's had sold themselves and their charge to the Spaniards; finally, there was a desperate plea from Drake and Norris, still trying to launch their attack on Portugal, that the Queen should now pay for the expedition since they themselves had run out of cash! Elizabeth is often criticized for being indecisive. But when the documents are laid end to end like this, so that the scale of the problems facing her is revealed, her indecision seems less reprehensible.

The cost of doing anything, especially by land, was a constant deterrent to action. At least naval operations offered the chance of prizes and also attracted private investment; sending armies into France did not. The French government did not even pay its share of the wages promised to the English expeditionary force. Sometimes Henry IV sent nothing; at other times he sent gifts in lieu of cash. In July 1592, for example, he sent the Queen a small elephant as a present. Not surprisingly, the documents record, "Her Majesty was not content with the sending of an elephant", for the beast cost £200 a year to keep and was growing all the time. In the end she sent it to her allies, the Dutch Republic. Yet not everything from France came gloom. Even if the Queen did not appreciate elephants, she might have chuckled in August 1592 at the cover-note attached to a dispatch from her expeditionary force which was brought by a messenger called Mr God: "[y]ou must not think," wrote the

sender, ponderously, that "all his words be Scripture."

A wealth of such delightful details, clearly narrated and elegantly woven with affairs of state into a single great tapestry, make *After the Armada* an enjoyable as well as an informative book. It must be noted, however, that it is based overwhelmingly on a single documentary source: the records of the Elizabethan State Paper Office, augmented by official documents in the Manuscripts Department of the British Library. These are muniments that Wernham knows better than anyone. For fifty years he has worked on the *Calendar*, and latterly on the *Lists and Annals*, of the State Papers Foreign. It is inconceivable that he has overlooked anything of importance in that vast repository of correspondence and papers. His account of how England fought her war in these years is unlikely to be bettered.

But what about why she fought; or why the war developed as it did? Here *After the Armada* appears less perfect. Wernham's account of set-pieces such as Parma's siege of Bergen-op-Zoom in 1588 or his relief of Rouen in 1592, for example, are unacceptably one-sided. Thus the account of the former reaches its climax on page 46 with a failed Spanish assault for which, readers are informed, "Estimates of the number of enemy killed or drowned varied between 400 and 800, among them being Don Alonso d'Idiazquez son of the Spanish secretary of state". The sources for these statements are State Papers Foreign and the printed *Calendar* of the correspondence of Lord Willoughby, the English commander. But had Wernham consulted the papers of "the enemy", freely available in Brussels and Simancas, he would have found different (and, perhaps, more reliable) estimates of losses; together with proof that Don Alonso de Idiáquez (sic) survived to become Colonel of a Spanish tercio in 1590, commander-in-chief of the Spanish forces in France from 1594, and Captain-General of the Milicia light cavalry in 1596. As for the siege of Rouen, which here takes up four chapters, Wernham tells us a great deal about the role of English troops in events (although most of this is already adequately covered in H. A. Lloyd's *The Rouen Campaign*, 1973); but he never explains how Parma contrived to raise the siege so unexpectedly in April 1592. The duke appears as a *deus ex machina* commanding an overwhelming force from the Netherlands; he covered sixty-five miles in six days and so caught the forces of Elizabeth and Henry IV at a fatal disadvantage. But the only words of explanation for this feat come from a couple of Spanish letters accidentally intercepted by the English forces and therefore preserved among

the State Papers Foreign. Parma's numerous unintercepted letters on the subject to Philip II are overlooked.

Wernham's reluctance to use foreign sources is not limited to military matters. In similar fashion, the comings and goings of the treasure fleets from America are here documented from ambassadorial reports contained in the *Calendar of State Papers Venetian*, rather than from the rich archives of the Seville House of Trade conveniently intubated in H. and P. Chaunu, *Sevilla et l'Athénisme 1504-1650*, Volume Three (1955). Finally, Wernham's detailed account of the troubles in Utrecht, with city magistrates loyal to Elizabeth opposed by provincial authorities loyal to Count Maurice, is based almost exclusively on *State Papers Holland* and adds little to the story already generally available. This is a pity, for a wealth of other sources exists in the Netherlands.

How serious a disadvantage is this reliance on - in effect - only one archive? Certainly there is nothing wrong with using the reports of English observers of Continental potentates, and their policies, to show what evidence was available to Elizabeth and her councillors as they made their decisions; but diplomatic dispatches offer far less reliable guidance to the true motives and secret actions of those Continental powers. It is doubtful whether English historians would take seriously a book on Elizabethan foreign policy written entirely from (for example) the dispatches of the Dutch diplomats resident in London. It is rather like trying to narrate the course of World War Two from British archives alone: El Alamein becomes more important than Stalingrad; the Allied bombing offensive in Germany seems an unqualified success; the invasion of Greece and Crete remain miserable failures, rather than the crucial factor which delayed Hitler's invasion of Russia by three months. But what if there were no other account of the war available? Would we not welcome my clear and well-documented history, whatever its bias? For this, in effect, is the position regarding the history of Philip II's last decade. There is no adequate history, in any language, of the king's sustained attempt to stem what he saw as the tide of heresy that threatened to engulf Western Europe.

After the Armada therefore makes an invaluable contribution to a major historical subject which has been unjustly neglected. Whatever doubts one may have about the Anglocentric perspective, this book fulfils triumphantly the task chosen by its author: the story of how Little England saved Western Europe from Habsburg hegemony will not need to be told again.

thought about it often) contributes nothing to our own understanding of the subject today. Professor Chandra's historical account is of the birth and development of scholarly techniques of analysis and of the ideas and attitudes which have influenced, sometimes encouraged but often impeded, the study of Indian art and works of art; to our own much extended knowledge of Indian works of art and their historical context; and to our greatly enhanced appreciation of their quality.

"The drunken cobbler riding a lion" from the *Shahnama of Firdawsi* (Sultanate India?) 1473-8, reproduced from Norah M. Titley's *Persian Miniature Painting* reviewed on this page.



"The drunken cobbler riding a lion" from the *Shahnama of Firdawsi* (Sultanate India?) 1473-8, reproduced from Norah M. Titley's *Persian Miniature Painting* reviewed on this page.

Chandra conceals the description of a few major personalities in the tale of the modern discovery of one of the great and ancient artistic traditions of the world. He has a keen eye for the diversity of the aims and the intellectual disciplines which they brought to the study of Indian art. The story begins in the 1830s, probably as a result of the ferment caused by the decipherments and discoveries of James Prinsep, "first of the great modern historians of India" whose "unrelenting and brilliant work . . . arranged the previous chaos of Indian history". In art history, however, the first serious contributor was an otherwise unknown Indian, Ram Raz, who in 1834 published a folio on the art of the Hindus, correlating the working practice of South Indian temple masons with descriptions in a Sanskrit treatise of the architectural elements of the Hindu temple. The next contribution was by an "irascible" Scots indigo planter, James Fergusson, who from 1829 to 1846 investigated, drew and described Hindu and Muslim architecture over a large part of the subcontinent. Far from applying European theories of architecture to these Indian monuments, Fergusson on the basis of his observations and inferences proceeded to construct an ambitious theory of the course of the development of European architecture also.

In the nineteenth century, sculpture was a field in which prevalent naturalism and admiration for Greco-Roman models was combined with a censorious hostility towards many aspects of Hinduism, and especially its explicit sexuality. Fergusson and his successors in the investigation of Indian architecture lack-

ed the conceptual apparatus and the inclination to conduct any valuable analysis of the substance and accident, iconography and iconology, symbolism and stylistic development of Indian temple sculpture. The vigour of the earlier tradition of British Indian "amateur" scholarship had decayed by the end of the nineteenth century. The great leaps forward were made by continental scholars trained in the evolving techniques and theory of art history as a recognized academic discipline. Foucher worked on the Gondhara sculpture of the North-West Frontier and its parallels with Greco-Roman sculpture; and Jouveau-Dubreuil, proclaiming his lack of concern with questions of aesthetics, constructed historical typologies of medieval South Indian sculpture and temple architecture. Early twentieth-century British and Indian employees of the Archaeological Survey of India absorbed something of their methods of analysis.

Indian painting was the last of the three arts to acquire a taxonomy and modern admirers. A leading role was played by Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy, of mixed Sinhalese and European descent. Once again we have a strange

cross-fertilization of disciplines, for he acquired the taxonomic methods of the natural sciences as a student of geology and as Director of the Mineralogical Survey of Ceylon. His contribution to the study of Indian painting was only a part of his exceptionally wide-ranging activities related to Indian art history. A polymath and an idealist, Coomaraswamy absorbed many European intellectual influences of his time (including those of William Morris and Paul Muo). As a theorist, Coomaraswamy provided a convincing affirmation of the dignity and the "Indianness" of Indian art against a deep-seated tendency among Western writers to attribute its merits to miscellaneous Western influences, and he wrote a descriptive history of Indian and Indonesian art which has not yet been bettered.

The frontispiece shows Coomaraswamy's aquiline profile rising above the swatches of a long white woollen shawl; and perhaps a portion of his mantle has fallen upon Pramod Chandra. He has made notable contributions in each of the three fields which he surveys. Apart from his penetrating exposition of the historical development of the study of Indian art, he provides a useful description of much work in progress today. He touches on the perils which beset the modern art historian of India - among others, the crude accepted nomenclature for styles (usually dynastic or sectarian rather than regional); the tendency to exonerate a purely local context development which are found synchronically over wide areas of the subcontinent; the temptation to trim the evidence to fit novel hypotheses; and, too often, a lack of knowledge of the relevant languages and of the cultural milieu which would be accounted disgraceful in art historians of Europe. The niggling tone perhaps falters towards the close of the final section on painting, where so much has come to light in the last thirty years, and the participants in the discovery have often been on such intimate terms of love, hate, controversy and pitched battle. Yet this is a learned and stylish guide to the historiography and practice of the study of Indian art.

Model manuscripts

B. W. Robinson

NORAH M. TITLEY
Persian Miniature Painting
272pp, with 47 colour and 82 black-and-white illustrations. British Library. £40.
0712300015

Over the last few years Norah M. Titley has brought out three books of major importance to the study of Islamic painting. Her catalogues of 1977 and 1981 cover all the Persian and Turkish (and some of the Indian) miniatures in the collections of the British Library and the British Museum, and in the present handsome volume she has gathered the threads together and given us her overall view of Islamic painting as represented in the collections she has served so long and so well.

But although she takes the national collections as her text, as it were, she discusses and illustrates (in black and white) the most important and relevant material elsewhere. (Most of the British Library material is well illustrated in colour.) Taking into consideration the two major gaps in the collection, the early Il-Khanid (Roshidiyya) school and Baysonghurlu's Herat academy, the book provides an eminently serviceable account of the whole subject, spiced from time to time with the kind of comment that can only be made by someone with a long experience of, and a strong affection for, the material concerned. There is a good chron map.

In her introduction Miss Titley says that one of her main objects has been to "introduce less well-known miniatures to those familiar with the subject", and this she has most successfully accomplished. The *Gulistan* of c.1460, the *Divan* of Boali, the remarkable range of early Turkish manuscripts, and the crucial Beḡgali *Sharaf Nama* are cases in point, and all lovers of the subject will be grateful for these excellent reproductions.

The full title of the book is "Persian Miniature Painting and its Influence on the Art of Turkey and India", and, after the main schools of Persian painting - the early fourteenth century, the Jalayrids, Shiraz, Herat, the Turkmanis, and the Safavids - Ottoman Turkey is given perceptive and sympathetic treatment, followed by Sultanate and Mughal India. The book ends with two useful chapters: the first on "Methods and Materials", and the other on "Literature", giving a brief sketch of the literary sources of the favourite subjects of illustration. In the former the rather astonishing statement is made that artists carried about precious manuscripts from place to place to provide themselves with models. But surely these volumes, once completed, remained the prized possessions of their patrons?

A current controversy in the study of Persian painting concerns the question of pre-Mughal miniature painting in India, which Titley considers in the chapter on "The Sultanate Period of India and the Influence of Persian Art, 15th-mid-16th century". So far as the British Library is concerned, the centre of controversy is

the *Shahnama* of 1438 (Or 1403), formerly the property of the translator Jules Mohl. This manuscript is very closely linked stylistically with two others, both copies of the *Khamza* (Quintet) of Nizami, one in the Library of Uppsala University (1439), and the other in the Topkapi Library at Istanbul (1441). The strongest stylistic link between these three, and a feature which occurs nowhere else, is a method of representing clouds by horizontal white streaks. This may be regarded as the forerunner of a seventeenth-century Indian convention admirably illustrated in p142 of the present volume (Punjab, 1686). Titley finally comes down in favour of a western Indian origin for the 1438 *Shahnama*, but places the other two members of the group at Shiraz. I venture to suggest that this illogical separation is an untenable compromise; these three manuscripts are stylistically inseparable, though the 1438 *Shahnama* is admittedly of lower quality than the other two. If the author is convinced that the 1438 manuscript is Indian, then the other two must be so too. Titley argues that the streaky white clouds "must have been" a feature of the Khazaffurid style of Shiraz. But no such clouds appear in any known Khazaffurid work. The so-called "Small *Shahnamas*" of the previous century are also involved in this problem. The reasons for regarding them as Indian are very strong, but Titley puts them at Tabriz, even using the question-begging expression "Small Tabriz *Shahnamas*". Later, however, she makes effective use of the Bengal manuscript of 1532 to solve the ancient problem of the British Library's *Yusuf and Zulaikha* manuscript (Or 4535), though not everybody will accept the date (1508) in a fly-leaf inscription.

Miss Titley has not been very well served by her editors. Childish spelling mistakes such as "dignitory" (twice), "oxydisation", and "Castill" (for "Castle" several times) should not be allowed to occur in a publication from the British Library; and misprints of dates (1334 for 1354 on p21, 1490 for 1590 on p193, and 1495 for 1595 on p194) should have been corrected. There are a few minor errors: Mani (d272) obviously could not have had any Muslim contemporaries (p14); the miniature from the Khawaju Kirmani manuscript of 1396 illustrated in fig 12 does not depict Sultan Sanjar, but Sultan Malik b. Arslan, with whom a similar story is associated; the colophon of the celebrated Shiraz *Zafar Nama* manuscript (p50) is dated to 1436 not 1434 (cf p58, where the correct date is given); and one would have thought that it was by now generally agreed that the magnificent "Sleeping Rustam" (fig 38) dates from the early sixteenth rather than from the late fifteenth century. It is strange that the book contains no mention of the late sixteenth-century *Shahnama* (Add.27257), one of the British Library's most splendid Persian manuscripts. Nevertheless, the book can be unreservedly recommended as a useful and stimulating companion to Titley's two preceding catalogues, and it should be used in conjunction with them. It is a splendid monument to mark her much regretted retirement.

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Controlling the acres

John Guy

J. P. COOPER
Land, Men and Beliefs: Studies in Early-modern History
Edited by G. E. Aymer and J. S. Morrill.
274pp. Hambledon Press. £18.
0907628265

Land, Men and Beliefs presents an instance when the reprinting of articles already available is justified. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts. The editors emphasize the exceptional scholarship and critical independence that were John Cooper's hallmarks; but it is his approach to early-modern history as a whole that now shines through.

Eleven articles are reprinted and two published for the first time. Most reverberate with the buzz of controversy. The themes are: the coupling of manors and social distribution of land and men in England; the nobility; Thomas Wentworth, earl of Strafford; seventeenth-century English economic policy; and the comparison of English and continental problems of government.

The two new essays concern ideal of gentility and reinvented in Tudor England. The former piece is a dazzling synthesis of the conflicting or contradictory currents within English social consciousness. Simplistic modern interpretations are exposed to austere scrutiny. Tudor attitudes set within their rightful context. Chivalric and humanist notions are compared with juristic traditions. Cooper's elucidation of the concept of gentility by reputation and of ideas of derogation is especially welcome. The paper contains some mistakes by contrast; the editors are right that Cooper himself would not have published this inchoate essay. It makes the point that the late Tudor system was still a partnership between landowners and crown authority. The most valuable suggestion is that the question of the retaining of townpeople needs further research.

Juxtaposition of the reprinted articles evokes something of Cooper's vision. He agreed with K. B. McFarlane that historians were too royalist in their views, and his contempt for Tudor historians naive enough to equate royal policy with progress or the common good is undiminished. He disapproved, too, of interpretations of Tudor and Stuart history that showed insensitivity to the rich experience of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Continuity and the broad sweep mattered.

Cooper's most seminal articles established the importance of descent for the ownership of landed estates and challenged the assumption that great lay landowners controlled much of the land in early-modern England. He doubted whether the acreage occupied by greater landowners changed significantly between 1436 and 1700. This conclusion reinforced the work of Thompson, but was reached by a more complex route. But if Cooper sidestepped Thomp-

son, he deployed his findings on descent, manors, landholding and aristocratic indebtedness to attack Tawney and Stone. Since Cooper wrote, these topics have been surveyed for the period 1600-1800 by Sir John Habakkuk.

The essays on Wentworth unravel historiographical knots in the case of one man. The relationship between Court and Country resembled a hall of mirrors. Wentworth's Parliamentary career was set in a local context in which contacts with the Court were the rule, distinctions between Court and Country attitudes were mutable and transitory, rivalry was a vital catalyst, mediation and harmony were archetypal goals. As earl of Strafford, Wentworth's actions testify to the interdependence of office and profit, and the need for networks of personal patronage to supplement altruism. If Strafford sought reconciliation in 1640, he had also staked his fortune on the survival of the regime in England and Ireland. Political and personal motivation united in a seamless web.

Historical models were anathema to Cooper, but comparisons between countries and cultures were valuable, because they offered something better than the truism that any historical situation is unique. Statistics he thought damaging if presented out of context or if they discounted problems raised by the evidence. It is striking that he impugned the abstraction of the county community as early as 1866. The proper unit for the study of great landowners is

the family and their interests usually crossed county boundaries. It is only misguided county archivists and local historians of today who too often attempt by Procrustean treatment of family archives to confine them within such boundaries. Lastly, he offered some asides about the House of Lords that are now the received wisdom of historians of Parliament.

Land, Men and Beliefs shows that Cooper was a historian for historians. He read voraciously but wrote little. He stood for all that was best in the Oxford School of Modern History. His passion was historical evidence untrammelled by narrow departmental specialization. His erudition, his distaste for generalization, his unwillingness to state firm conclusions since he saw, spontaneously, the objections to every argument - these qualities demand dedicated or expert readers.

Yet if Cooper dissected he did not dissect. If he sought accuracy he was never afraid of accuracy. The qualities that made him a perfectionist inhibited his productivity. He perhaps wrote best when provoked or irritated. "I should like to end", he concluded an essay, "with a few remarks, entirely tentative in intention and inconclusive in result. If sometimes sweeping and dogmatic in expression, owing to the need for brevity, in the hope that they may irritate and stimulate others into beginning a well-founded comparative analysis." This was a fitting epitaph for the study of great landowners in

Science for businessmen

Bernard Dixon

RICHARD CASEMENT
Man Suddenly Sees to the Edge of the Universe
 204pp. The Economist. £4.95.
 085058 0633

As a journalist, Richard Casement was an innovator. He not only persuaded the editor of *The Economist* to launch a science and technology section; he went on to write much of it himself, with extraordinary insight and industry. When he died in 1982 at the age of forty, every science correspondent in the country knew that Casement had established something unique — in a sector of their craft where opportunities for creativity might have been considered mediocre. And his death was mourned with particular sadness because all recognized that his pioneering exercise, though abundantly successful, was far from complete.

As this fine anthology of his writings reminds us, Casement's hallmark was the breadth of

knowledge and wisdom he distilled into a magazine section whose principal task was simply to inform readers about "R & D" and its associated business opportunities. Three aspects merit particular attention: Richard Casement's skill in fulfilling that primary objective in a field already occupied by other distinguished commentators; his felicitous manner of explanation, blending factual weight with colourful analogy; and his sensitive assessment of the strengths and cautions which characterize scientific methodology.

First, the world of microchips, biotechnology and the so-called sunrise industries bosed upon them. "The nineteenth century was the age of steam and steel. The industrialised world is now entering the age of electronics," Casement wrote in 1977.

Integrated circuits will multiply all over offices, factories, homes, shops, aircraft, cars and what have you. They will control factory machines, enable you to turn the oven on by telephone before leaving the office, minimise your car's fuel consumption and exhaust emission, automatically debit your bank account when you go shopping, and end the day

playing poker with you. They consume practically no energy, and their basic raw material is silicon, I said, the second most abundant element on earth. Such enthusiasm, now commonplace, is easily parodied. But the striking feature of the award-winning article which followed was that it combines the same brisk style with profound understanding to expound the essentials of microelectronics and the co-related commercial world. It was a masterly survey of a nascent industry. The ending was vintage Casement too, quite unlike the manic cadences usually heard from the financial press:

Some proposed applications of computing are frivolous; some will raise the ogre of infringement of privacy; some will prove less economic than their promoters claimed (among other ways, by provoking working men to resist them through strikes or overmanning); and others will be rightly accused of making life more impersonal but will be adopted all the same, because of economic pressures. Many others will, like paperclips, carve out a lasting use.

Richard Casement brought the same shrewdly balanced approach to biological science. "This untidy squiggle is the neatest

technology ever invented: genes," he wrote in 1978, before biotechnology had become a buzz word. "It has been perfected by evolution, which is like designing Concord by accident, but which works because the trial and error takes places over thousands of generations and millions of years." He then explained how genetic engineering could revolutionize "the treatment of disease, the feeding of the hungry, the manufacture of chemicals, the conservation of resources, the control of pollution and no one yet knows what else".

Here too, however, Casement pleaded prudence. "There are going to be many disappointments; the market forecasts are all guesses," he warned readers after telling them about California's biotech boom. "To turn the base metal of biology into big profits will need not only a lot more basic research but also a lot more practical experience, a lot of process engineering and much bigger investments than most people are contemplating today. Risks will be high, patents hard to enforce, competition frenetic and most products (when they do come) rapidly obsolescent." To write this in *The Economist* at a time when journalistic fervour and stock prices were at their height cannot have been easy. But he has been proved right.

Speaking at a memorial service on September 17, 1982, his editor, Andrew Knight, said that although Richard Casement was not a graceful writer, he was a clear one. Knight might also have mentioned a consistent economy of prose. This was not simply dictated by house style; it was a result of painstaking efforts to give every word weight, to make every word work. "Life in the tropics necessitated three changes vital to man's subsequent evolution: stereo and colour vision, a brain bright enough to handle this visual information, and hands good at holding on to branches," Richard Casement wrote in 1979. And elsewhere, "the case for the ecological doomsayers is that the earth is a more complex physical, chemical and biological phenomenon than progressive technologists in the 1960s liked to imagine". And, apropos scientific method, "somebody not prepared to use induction would have to drink all the water in the sea before being prepared to admit that the sea is salty".

As these quotes suggest, Casement's work ranged far more widely and deeply than one might have expected from a science correspondent primarily serving the business community. Scholarship and sensitivity were particularly evident in his careful explanation of the methods of science and the philosophy underlying them. He managed to put across both the enormous power of science and the caveats and qualifications which should accompany its conclusions. Because he appreciated even more acutely than some actual exponents the dynamic rather than static nature of research, he often recalled that its "truths" were open to question. Proof was a dangerous term, dogmatism anathema.

But this awareness of the guarded character of true science did not mean blindness or even tolerance towards nonsense. Not least in the criticism of America's resurgent creationism, Casement argued forcibly for the massive coherent strength of evolutionary theory. He also perceived and explained very clearly the real nature of the debate, which was not just about fossils but about the intellectual and technological foundations of our civilization. "Believe the creationists," he wrote in 1980, "and you must throw out much of modern science — not just evolution but geology and nuclear physics too."

Perusing this anthology as an admirer of a fellow writer has been an exercise blending gratitude with sadness. Scrutinizing it as an assiduous reviewer has been embarrassingly unproductive in that my only critical notes are some irritable scribbles about minor peculiarities of *The Economist* — the habit of hyphenating *E. coli*, for example, or designating Paul Berg, Herbert Boyer and Francis Crick as "some pages and Professor oo officers".

Richard Casement would have chuckled over such trivia. He would not have forgiven me for saying that his name deserves to be better known — as it would have been, but for the magazine's odd practice of enveloping its talent in anonymity.

The ingredients of a romance

Brian Vickers

TOMAS HÄGG
The Novel in Antiquity
 264pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £15.
 0 631 130144
 R. L. HUNTER
A Study of 'Daphnis & Chloe'
 136pp. Cambridge University Press. £17.50.
 0521254523

The Greek romance was a genre with a surprisingly long afterlife. The specifically Greek contribution begins with Chariton's *Cheremes and Callirhoe* in the first century BC, and ends with the most complex narrative, Heliodorus' *Ethiopian Tale*, sometime between the second and fourth centuries AD. The Greek romances were one element taken over by the Roman comic novels Petronius' *Satyricon* and Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, but the main lines of influence were widely scattered, the genre disappearing for a while and resurfacing in some unlikely places. The pure form reappears with four novels in the Byzantine twelfth century, one of which, *Hysmine and Hysminias*, is an packed with rhetorical ornament that Erwin Rohde described it as the product of an Achilles Tatius (author of *Leucippe and Clitophon*) "gone out of his mind", and a modern scholar sees it as a parody. (At such length?)

More important for later writers and artists was the influence on early Christian narratives, such as *Paul and Thecla*, the Acts of the Apostles and the hybrid *Pseudo-Clementines*, which is part novel, part sermon. The presence of narrative-patterns derived from Greek romance in Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*, a thirteenth-century compilation of saints' lives arranged according to the calendar, is striking, and its influence on medieval and Renaissance painting, particularly fresco narratives, was enormous. Another early romance with a vast medieval influence was the *Alexander Romance*, from about 300 AD, which inserted letters into the narrative, and mixed marvels with hero-worship with such success that it was translated into at least thirty-five different languages, and much imitated.

While one can show a continuous tradition to the Middle Ages, for most modern readers the real importance of Greek romance was that its rediscovery in the sixteenth century, heralded by Amyot's translation of Heliodorus in 1547, inspired many of the greatest Renaissance writers. Sir Philip Sidney praised Heliodorus and Xenophon (of the *Education of Cyrus*, that exemplary biography) for having the true ability of the poet "in feigning notable images of virtues, vices", and rewrote his *Arcadia* in the manner of Heliodorus. Shakespeare knew the romances through their imitation by Greene and Lodge, but also referred to Heliodorus direct, while some of the formal features of romance — separations, tests of loyalty or chastity, reunions — run through the comedies, early and late, and are remodelled in the tragedies (*Othello*, *Leary*) by being broken, the cyclic structure of return being fractured into a linear one of loss. Cervantes, although he parodied elements of romance in *Don Quixote*, gave himself wholeheartedly to its emulation in *Perils and Slights of the world*, which, as Tomas Hägg reminds us, was his last novel, and Cervantes thought, his greatest. The young Racine, having had his copy of *Theagenes and Charicleia* twice confiscated by the acristan at Port-Royal, responded by learning it by heart.

Why did this genre exert such an influence, and why did it arise in the first place? The romances appeared in the Hellenistic period, flourished under the Roman emperors, being produced in Alexandria, Egypt and other Greek-speaking areas around the eastern Mediterranean. Scholars of a univocal bent relate its appearance to the growth of a middle class and a new reading public, perhaps largely female; others see a reflection of a period of religious uncertainty, the loneliness of the individual being mirrored in stories of wandering; others connect it to the practices of mystery religions. Some of these causes are unconvincing: the stories involve journeys, but they all include returns and reunions — "Jack (doth have Jill)" — not only women like happy endings, and

while Heliodorus certainly alludes to the cult of the sun, the religious element is otherwise secondary. The sociological argument is attractive, but should be tempered with an awareness of literary experiment, so strong in this period. The heroic traditions of epic and tragedy were no longer interesting, whether because of the great cultural changes or the irrelevance of a heroic ethos to this society of tradesmen, teachers, and rhetoricians.

Whatever the reasons, the romances were certainly much nearer ordinary life than tragedy or epic. The basic plot involves an idealized young couple, who fall in love and wish to marry. Some indeed do marry, but in all cases the lovers are separated from their home and from each other by adverse fortune, such as tempest, shipwreck, pirates. This separation leads to two important phases of plot. The heroine (and in one novel the hero) becomes the object of a rival and unwanted love, is tortured and put under other pressures, which she endures with dignity, yet also with eloquent sublimity. Despite all pressures the lovers remain loyal to each other and to the idea of monogamous love, an idealization of the bourgeois marriage. At the same time one or both search for the other, a sequence that can be extended by the insertion of further episodes, but which concludes with the consummation of love in marriage. Instead of looking for external reasons for their success, we might consider that the attractiveness of the Greek romances lay in their narrative form itself.

Resembling a tidied-up, chronologically ordered and much simplified form of the *Odyssey*, this plot type offers a clearly graspable outward frame within which episodes could be inserted, set pieces integrated, rhetorical occasions developed. In several romances a strong visual-theatrical element intrudes, the *ekphrasis* or set-piece description, and *Daphnis & Chloe* is supposedly based on a cycle of paintings. The separation form led to a bifurcation of narrative, giving the writer a chance to develop ironic parallels and contrasts in the twin story-lines, but also to make provocative and frustrating switches from one to the other at moments of crisis. The use of oppressors and adverse fortune could test the main characters, not to breaking point, as in tragedy, but to the point where some deeper facets of personality emerge. The new feature in the romances was that the character under pressure was usually a woman, which sometimes had the awkward result, as A. R. Heisemann observed in his stimulating study *The Novel Before the Novel* (reviewed in the TLS on February 3, 1978), that the heroes seem singularly ineffective. The development of the heroine as a suffering but resourceful woman may prove to be the romances' most important legacy to later fiction — Boonaccio and Shakespeare learned from them, as did Sidney — yet this move cannot be explained, as Hägg explains it, solely in terms of a female reading public. These heroines display a different kind of sensibility, a plangent pathos with a resolution in adversity, which writers rather deliberately cultivated.

It was as a repository of narrative possibilities, with a new attitude to suffering (so easily taken over for the trials and martyrdoms of the saints), that the Greek romances exerted, and continue to exert, their fascination. Their exploration by modern narrative theory is long overdue, but narrative form is not the main concern in these two new studies. Hägg, professor of Classics at Bergen and author of a rigorous but "pre-modern" study of narrative technique in the romances, provides a general introductory handbook which is beautifully produced and full of helpful features, such as an endpaper map showing the travels of the hero and heroine in Xenophon's *Ephesian Tale* (they manage to see most of the Mediterranean), chronological tables and an almost comprehensive bibliography. (The omission here concerns modern English translations. While it is good to know that a text under Bryon Reardon. The grand impression of coiled temporary studies of romance, is producing a new set of translations, one should not forget the admirably fluent and stylish versions produced by Paul Tzafir, not only *Daphnis* (Penguin) and *Lucian's The Ass*, but also a series of limited editions for the Golden Cockerel Press.

with illustrations by Mark Severin and Eric Fraser. These might be reissued in a cheaper one-volume format. Hägg also provides a remarkable series of eighty illustrations of incidents from the romances taken from classical sources — coins, mosaics, papyrus, wall-paintings — and later art, including a supplement on *Daphnis & Chloe*, a story that has always provided a chance for some agreeably soft porn.

The Novel in Antiquity may now be the best available introduction to the subject in English. It surveys the whole field chronologically, and attends to questions of audience, text and transmission. It covers a great deal, but does so by a mixture of plot-summary and quotation, with not enough analysis or evaluation. The long quotations do give the beginning reader an idea of what the stories are like, but the author assumes that we know how to read them. He occasionally comments on formal topics, noting Xenophon's switching between the parallel lines of action in the *Ephesian Tale* with the resulting need for "resumptive elements": he shows how Achilles Tatius' first-person narrative at first sustains a restricted perspective but then lapses into careless omniscience; and he confirms that Heliodorus, for all his ambitious innovations, did not master the complications of retrospective narrative. But these are isolated critical insights in a flow of background information and dutiful summaries of scholarly opinion.

Hägg is prone to passing over demonstrable weaknesses in his texts, such as the miraculous escapes in Heliodorus. These become a tedious feature in the Christian romances, where miracles are inserted whenever the plot reaches an impasse, where "at the critical moment God intervenes", manipulation of narrative proving the existence of the deity. But while Hägg justifies the historical importance of the romances, he claims too much for them on absolute grounds. The romances, as he loyally puts it, "make an amazingly modern and lively impression": not if you read much modern literature, they don't. The *Alexander Romance* shows the vogue for epistolography by inserting letters, but it seems rash to hail it as an "epistolary novel", in which "the letter-writers' differing characters emerge". Despite its many good features, I ended this book with less admiration for the Greek romances than when I began it. The claims made are too great, above all the designation of the romances as novels. True, they have more in common with real life than other romances do, but they give little sense of a social context beyond the lovers — stereotyped characters who do not develop — and they have a restricted and interchangeable range of plot forms that are subject to permutation and combination. The novel is more than this.

Hägg attempts a great deal, but achieves less than he might have done. R. L. Hunter's aim is more modest, to offer "a basic guide to the literary and rhetorical background" of *Daphnis & Chloe*. Where Hägg admits that his failure to discuss rhetoric is a serious omission, Hunter is illuminating on his text's links with the Second Sophistic, in such rhetorical set pieces as the description of a luxurious garden, and in the use of *apophysis* to appeal to "the mind's eye", narrative *ekphrasis*. By presenting his novels as the story behind a painting, Longus can foreshadow "the themes of art, nature, and imitation". It is in the last of these that Hunter's interests chiefly lie, much of his short book (a Cambridge dissertation) being concerned with "the literary texture": the music of allusions to Homer and Theocritus chiefly, but also to Sappho and Philetas (the father of Hellenistic poetry, whose *oeuvre* is known only from later Latin imitations). Like other writers making heavy use of tradition, Longus expects his readers to recall the original context, and its tone, and to appreciate his skilful obliqueness. Hunter's demonstration is handled with tact and with much scholarship, but the inevitable result is a series of detailed discussions of specific topics rather than an overall argument. At least he makes no great claims for his author, granting Longus "high artifice" but no "real intellectual depth": he tickles, rather than nourishes our intellects.

He tickles something else, too. The unique feature of Longus' plot is that, unlike the other romances, his two lovers are together

most of the time, indeed grow up side by side. Although briefly threatened by external forces, they are soon reunited, and, lacking the obstacles of shipwreck, kidnapping, or disapproving parents, could consummate their love at any time. Only, the embarrassing thing is, they don't know how to do it. Titillating his readers, and testing their disbelief, Longus creates two young lovers who have been brought up in the country but are ignorant of the facts of life. As Hunter learnedly puts it, they do not have the *techné* of love-making. There is added piquancy in the name and occupation of Daphnis, the naïve hero in charge of randy animals, who on one occasion tries to do it as the goats do it but fails, and only learns the trick with the help of the older woman, Lycanion. All this gives the reader and illustrator much innocent amusement, but in narrative terms one could say that the lovers' ignorance has the same plot-function as the separations in the other romances. The obstacle separating them is internal, not external: indeed Longus has cunningly chosen the only plot ingredient that could keep his lovers apart, since all his other decisions force them together. Hunter thinks that the "narrative threat" of their union is kept subordinate to the elaboration of self-contained episodes, but he underestimates the interest that the ordinary reader takes in the erotic happiness of the characters, and the peculiar tension created by the postponement of this union. Since the romance also records the yearly return of the seasons, we can see a juxtaposition of a cyclic against a linear movement in the gradual coming together of the lovers, a contrast imitated, perhaps, by Spenser in *The Shepherd's Calendar*, where the linear movement is towards fulfillment and frustration.

Dr Hunter's study is limited, but will be of much value as a reconstruction of literary context. On one hand, though, it may be criticized, for making no concessions to the reader without Greek or Latin. It would not have been much trouble to add translations, and classicists might realize that although professional study of their discipline may be declining a wider general audience still exists.

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Adrian Lyttelton

H. STUART HUGHES
Prisoners of Hope: The Silver Age of the Italian
Jews 1924-1974
(188pp. Harvard University Press. £12.75.
0674 707273

The reason which has led H. Stuart Hughes to devote a book to the literature of Italian Jews is pleasingly stated by him at the outset. It lies in his personal experience of the high proportion of Italian Jews among his friends, and in the connection he made between this and the great prominence of writers of Jewish origin in contemporary Italian literature. The problem raised is a delicate one: how is it possible to identify the sources of Jewish achievement without falling into the trap of identifying the Jews as "special" or "different", or particularly modern, and so unwittingly confirming the generalizations of antisemitism? In the aftermath of Hitler, even positive appreciations could easily seem threatening or embarrassing to those of Jewish descent. The political philosopher Norberto Bobbio, whom Hughes quotes, found a solution by talking of the "elective affinity" which he felt to exist between his own identity as an anti-fascist intellectual and that of his Jewish friends. A "critical spirit" and an absence of provincialism were not peculiar to Jews, but they were more likely to be found among them. It may be true, as Peter Gay has written, that we need a sociology of "stupid Jews" to correct over-hasty generalizations; but providing one recognizes that one is talking about probability and not destiny, a sociology of Jewish intelligence might be more rewarding.

Why have so many Jews excelled in literature, science and the intellectual professions? The answer most often given, the urge to compensate for the sense of being an excluded minority, is not easily applicable to the Italian case. In liberal Italy, the Jews enjoyed a real sense of integration and freedom from threat. In a new state beset by provincialism and struggling against the anathemas of the Church, the Jew could seem not the antithesis but the epitome of the Italian. Less easy to explain is the decline of Catholic antisemitism, which Hughes traces in part to the surprisingly sympathetic outlook of the conservative Plus X.

Before the First World War, as Hughes points out, Jews were conspicuous on the Italian literary scene only by their absence. Their distinction in science, scholarship and politics

was not matched in literature. Their one contribution of real importance was not through writing but through publishing, with the leading Milanese house of Treves.

One might, then, think after all that the Jewish literary sense arose only under the stimulus of a sense of threat, with the coming of fascism. But Hughes can show that this has little relevance to the writing of either Svevo or Moravia. There is, indeed, an inherent difficulty in Hughes's subject: how can one connect the experience of Italian Jews before and after the terrible recognition of a common destiny which was finally forced upon them in the 1930s? The simplest way out would be to deny that it is in any way relevant that Svevo and Moravia were Jewish, but I think that Hughes is right in dismissing this as too easy. Nevertheless, his attempts to discover a Jewish identity in these two writers are not wholly convincing. He picks up the themes of *senilità* and *noia*, or world-weariness, which do seem in some way to link Svevo, Moravia and the Bassani of *L'Aironc*. He certainly does not pretend that this is anything more than a "Jewish variant on an Italian theme"; however, the reader is not perhaps sufficiently informed here of the wider context of Italian - and European - preoccupations with decadence and *ennui*. Is it wholly fanciful to suggest that concern with the theme of ageing may have something to do with the demographic shift experienced by the middle classes? Here, certainly, the Jews were in an avant-garde position: the demographer Massimo Livi Bacci has noted that in limitation of births they preceded by a hundred years the behaviour of the majority of Italians.

In any case, Hughes argues persuasively that the element in Svevo's work which might be regarded as owing something to Jewish tradition is not, as the critic De Benedetti tried to assert, the sense of fatality and premature ageing in itself. On the contrary, the lesson of Svevo's last and greatest novel, *La coscienza di Zeno*, lies in the ability shown by the hero to rise above *ennui*, by recognizing the absurdity of existence, and particularly his own, and sublimating despair through an ironic self-consciousness. This does have something in common with the sense, of which Hughes talks elsewhere, of "the little margin indispensable for survival" which was to be one of the Jews' best resources in the time of persecution. Incidentally, it is rather surprising that Hughes fails to discuss the apocalyptic vision of catastrophe with which Zeno ends. The problem with Svevo's part in the story is perhaps not so much with his Jewish as with his Italian

identity. This was a conscious rather than a natural acquisition; Svevo was a genuinely "foreign" writer, not because he was Jewish but because he received his early education in Germany and lived in a city which belonged to *Mitteleuropa*, with an ethnic and cultural diversity unknown in Italy before 1918.

If the specifically Jewish variant on the theme of *noia* and *senilità* is, finally, to be seen in the ability to overcome them, where does this leave one with Moravia and Bassani? Hughes himself seems to hesitate about Bassani, at one time noting the similarity of his pessimism in *L'Aironc* to that of Moravia, but elsewhere playing it down. In any case, one might certainly question whether Moravia's world-weariness has anything specifically Jewish about it. True, Moravia himself hinted at a hereditary "excess of sensibility". But his individual history as an invalid seems a more convincing explanation. Moravia's characters in *Gli Indifferenti* and in many of his short stories live in a world dominated by conventions which have lost their religious and moral sanctions. This seems to me to have more to do with the particular atmosphere of post-papal Rome than with anything Jewish. Indeed, as Hughes observes, Jewish writers tended to be more Italian than the Italians in their sense of family tradition as a moral resource. It is just this which is strikingly lacking in Moravia.

It is only with the cultural conformity imposed by fascism that Jewish writers came to occupy a place of disproportionate importance in Italian literature. In the case of Svevo it is true that he only belongs to Hughes's "silver age" by virtue of the delay in the discovery of his creative achievement. Here chance and James Joyce seem to have been all-important; but the eventual enthusiasm of Montale and others may have been sharpened by the contrast with a cultural scene dominated by second-hand rhetoric. Again, the relationship between Jewish writers and Italian writers (both Jewish and non-Jewish) is a theme that could perhaps have been explored in more depth by Hughes.

One would conclude that there was something in the "residual" Jewish identity, of which Hughes writes, that made it easier to resist the pressures of provincialism and official optimism that were so strong in fascist Italy. This seems to have been true in spite of the fact that it was not till the late 1930s that Italian Jews required urgent reasons for that peculiar sensitivity to oppression which German or French Jews had developed long before. However, to read some of the contemporary

reviews of Svevo or of Moravia's *Indifferenti* is disconcerting. It is true that respectable critics at least avoided actual antisemitism; but the contrast often drawn between the "organic" or "decadent", introspective, unhealthily acute revealed by these authors and the "vital" spirit of authentic Italian literature was ominous. Jewish writers were not yet exposed to menace as Jews, but they were conscious among the representatives of a sparse and fragile modernity, at odds with the regime's aspirations.

The riddle of Jewish identity becomes less problematic with the onset of the period of disaster. Even then, the Italian Jews' sense of shock was often tempered by gratitude for the humanity and friendship extended to them by so many ordinary Italians. Hughes chronicles with great sensitivity the reasons which Italian Jewish writers were able to find for keeping hope alive against the odds. He quotes the paradox of the writer Augusto Segre: "many times... Jewish optimism is born of despair. Only for prisoners of hope is there a way tomorrow." But the psychic costs of optimism were none the less severe. The irrational guilt of the survivor which has been described by Bruno Bettelheim seems to have afflicted Italian Jews as well, to judge from the letters of Bassani. In Ferrara, however, there were other reasons for guilt as well. For a number of leading Jewish families had close ties with the fascist leader Italo Balbo and had occupied important positions in the local power structure. After the war, therefore, the "illusion of assimilation" hid a double pretence: that of Jews who pretended that they had never been party to discrimination, and that of Jews who pretended that they had never been fascists. The situation was particularly painful because Ferrara had seemed such a reassuring and protective environment.

Hughes has written a provocative book which mixes more problems than it resolves. It hovers a little uneasily between literary criticism and a kind of historical anthropology of Italian Jewish communities. Specialists will all agree will have their criticisms to make. But one of the merits of the book is that it does not fit into established categories. It is also a very attentive in nuances and pleasures to read. Like Peter Clay's work on *Freud, Jews and Anti-Semitism*, it will help in the understanding of the situation of Jewish intellectuals in those national cultures of which they are unquestionably firmly part before the age of intolerance.

Values of the desert

Michael Carver

JAMES LUNT
Glubb Pasha: A biography
246pp. Harvill Press. £12.50.
0002726386

General Sir John Glubb's peremptory dismissal on March 1, 1956, by the twenty-year old King Hussein from command of Jordan's Arab Legion, which he had held since 1939, marked the end of an era in imperialism. Glubb would have hated being thought of as an imperialist. He was not interested in the exercise of Britain's power over other races or nations, and had no wish to proselytize or convert them to modern Western civilization. Far from being a racist, he regarded the traditional Arab bedouin, with whom he spent his life, as his equals, and their manners and outlook on life as, if anything, superior to twentieth-century Western ways, and certainly better suited to their conditions of life. If he had prejudices, they were against those who had rejected the habits and values of the desert and been affected by the impact of Western civilization.

The submarine man

A. O. J. Cockshut

PETER PADFIELD
Dönitz: The Last Führer
524pp. Gollancz, £12.95.
0575 031867

"Very ambitious and consequently asserts himself to obtain prestige... must therefore be brought to take things more calmly and not to set exaggerated demands, above all on himself." Such was the verdict, a year or so before Hitler's coming to power, on Dönitz, written by Admiral Canaris, a subtler, stranger and cleverer man than Dönitz was. Self-demand can take many forms; for Dönitz, it seems to have been mainly a demand for courage and loyalty. Courage and loyalty require the suppression of doubts and hesitations. Life has a way of attacking us at our weakest point; and it was the tragedy of Dönitz that he was placed in a situation where courage and loyalty would lead him to moral disaster. His most unlovely moment was when he broadcast a bitter condemnation of the generals involved in the plot of July 1944, and lauded it with antisemitic nonsense worthy of Goebbels himself.

Dönitz was always where the action was. 1914 found him aboard the *Breslau*, the companion of the Goeben in the escape through the Mediterranean to Turkey. He transferred to submarines and thus avoided close contact with the creeping demoralization of the High Seas Fleet. All the same, he must have known of the mutiny of 1918, and it is one of several significant omissions from his autobiography. He could, as Canaris seems to have perceived, face any danger and hardship more easily than he could confront a question in his own mind, or a doubt about the cause he served. It was equally characteristic that, though an affectionate family man, he greeted the news of the loss of a second son within a year by asking his wife to act as if nothing was amiss as hostess at a lunch party. In the Second World War, he commanded the submarines; and he may have been right in thinking that this was the only arm that could have won the war for Germany. Certainly, Churchill agreed with him. In 1943, Hitler's disillusionment with the ineffectiveness of the surface ships led to the dismissal of Raeder and the appointment of Dönitz to the supreme naval command. At Hitler's death he became, for a few days leading to the final surrender, his successor.

Peter Padfield has a fascinating story to tell and, in strictly naval terms, he tells it very well. If most naval history is only journalism in hard covers, and if Arthur Marder, one of the greatest historians of the century, is to be placed at the apex, Padfield's place is certainly well above the middle. His prose is fluent and clear, and his work is documented with great thoroughness. Before criticizing it we should remember what an extraordinarily difficult subject he has chosen. Naval history, which

on the Arab world. His failure to adapt to the Arab awakening was his undoing.

Glubb's life was an example of the best type of paternalist imperialism in its devotion to the interests of the inhabitants of the country in which he served. He was activated by a simple Christian faith and the values of the public school of his youth. He never sought personal fame or benefit: so much so that, at the time of his dismissal, it was found that he had served Jordan for twenty-six years without a cent, and the only pension to which he was entitled was one of a few hundred pounds from the British Colonial Office for his service under the Government of Palestine from 1934 to 1948.

Commissioned into the Royal Engineers (in which his father was a major-general) in 1915, Glubb distinguished himself on the Western Front before being badly wounded in the face in 1917, an injury which earned him the Arab nickname of *Abu Humuk* — "Father of the little jaw". In 1921 he volunteered for service in Mesopotamia (as Iraq was then called), when the British garrison was reinforced in deal with riots against the imposition of British rule to replace that of the defeated Turks. In March 1921, Winston Churchill, as Colonial Secretary, adopted T. E. Lawrence's sugges-

tion of imposing the Pax Britannica by a combination of aircraft, armoured cars and locally-raised levies. As a sapper, Glubb was involved in the construction of airfields and learnt Arabic in order to communicate with his labour force. An essential element of "air control" was the stationing of intelligence officers in areas where it was likely to be applied, partly to provide warning of impending trouble and partly to guide the aircraft on to the right targets when punitive action was taken. Glubb's knowledge of Arabic led to his appointment to one such post, although he refused to transfer to the RAF. At that time the pastoral tribes west of the Euphrates were constantly harassed by the fanatical Wahabi Ikhwan, whose depredations on their neighbours were exploited by Ibn Saud in expansion his power over the whole of what is now Saudi Arabia.

Glubb's long love-affair with the Arabs began with his involvement in the protection of these pastoral tribes against raids both by the Ikhwan and by Ibn Saud's men. When the British Mandate came to an end with the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty in 1930, Abdullah's Government of Transjordan, suffering from the same sort of trouble, offered him employment in its Arab Legion, a para-military police force, raised and commanded by Peake Pasha. Glubb's task was to organize the bedouin tribes on the frontier with Saudi Arabia to provide their own protection. The British Palestine Government's Transjordan Frontier Force, recruited from other Arabs, mostly Circassians, had not proved successful in this task, but Glubb raised a locally recruited Desert Patrol of bedouin, which brought frontier raids to an end. These years, from 1931 to 1939, were his golden years, when he lived among the bedouin, adopting their manners and way of life.

Powers of direction

Ian McGeoch

RICHARD HUMBLE
Fraser of North Cape
386pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £14.95.
0710095554

It was in keeping with his distaste for self-advertisement in others — especially war leaders — that Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Fraser of North Cape had to be enjoined into permitting his own biography to be written. Fortunately, though scrupulous in having kept no private diary during the war — "we weren't supposed to" — he did, in retirement, tape-record his memoirs. From this source, augmented by the records of a series of interviews with the Admiral, help from many officers who served with him and free access to the Fraser Papers, Richard Humble has compiled a most readable life.

It is safe to say that from the turn of the last century until the 1970s the Royal Navy was dominated by the Gunner Branch. The all-big-gun battleship, with its labour-intensive yet complex weapon system, called for a breed of officer to take charge of the gunnery who combined strong directing power with a firm grasp of technology. Not surprisingly, most of the ambitious and many of the brightest young naval officers opted, or were chosen, to specialize in gunnery, including, in the year 1912, Lieutenant Bruce Austin Fraser RN.

One might have thought that when war came in 1914, employment at or near the centre of events, preferably in the Grand Fleet, would have been found for the most brilliant gunnery officer of his year, who had just received "the thanks of 'Their Lordships on vellum'" for compiling the *Handbook for Director Firing* (a method whereby all the guns may be laid and fired simultaneously by one gun-layer.) But no. Fraser was sent in an ancient light cruiser of the Third Fleet, with an antiquated armament. Unexpectedly, he saw some action — at the Dardanelles. And the experience of that bungled enterprise was not lost on him. But when Jutland took place he was back at the Gunnery School, instructing, and only received a first-class appointment, as Gunnery Officer of the new battleship HMS Resolution, because the officer already nominated had been killed in action.

although, apart from the Legion's headdress, he never dressed as one of them, as Lawrence and others had done.

From 1939, when he replaced Peake in command of the whole Legion, the scene changed. The war in the Middle East, the subsequent troubles in Palestine, culminating in the end of the British Mandate, and the long drawn-out struggle between the Arabs and Israel, in which Jordan was in the front line, led to the conversion of the Arab Legion from a small para-military police force into the Jordanian armed forces of today. Glubb was increasingly out of his element as both the Legion and Jordan itself changed their natures. The turning-point was the 1948 Arab-Israel war, which broke out as the British withdrew from Palestine. The Legion was the only effective Arab force, bearing the brunt of the fighting, while Glubb himself bore the brunt of the blame for Arab failure. The murder of Abdullah in 1951 and the Israeli raid on Qibya in 1953 widened the gap between Glubb and those who advised, influenced and brought pressure to bear on the King. Hussein having succeeded his father Talal in 1953, when the British, generally unpopular in the Arab world at the time, withdrew from their Suez Canal base in 1955, Glubb's position became increasingly delicate. It was only a matter of time before he left, and he, and the sixty British officers in the Legion, were lucky to get out without the fiasco of the Suez affair seven months after their dismissal.

James Lunt, who himself served in the Legion under Glubb, has written a soldierly, straightforward biography which does justice to the attractive character of his subject, and gives a balanced judgment of the influence at work in Jordan which led to the abrupt end of a career selflessly devoted to the interests of the bedouin Arab.

An Icarus against fascism

P. N. Furbank

IRIS ORIGIO
A Need to Testify: Four Portraits
274pp. John Murray. £12.50.
017195 40224

The design of Iris Origio's *A Need to Testify* is rather attractive: four brief lives (of Louro de Bosis, Ruth Draper, Gaetano Salvemini and Ignazio Silone) connected by a fifth life (the author's own) and by friendships, a love-affair and a dedication to anti-fascism. There is something of a plot too, or anyway a central action — the leaflet-dropping raid over Rome performed by Louro de Bosis in a light aeroplane on October 3, 1931. The celebrated historian and anti-fascist Gaetano Salvemini, who had become a friend of the young de Bosis, knew and half approved of his plan (which had the character of a romantic suicide) and afterwards helped to give the story wider currency, while Ruth Draper, though seventeen years older than de Bosis, was his lover and hence was in close touch with him all through the secret goings and comings and mishaps of that summer. It is a gripping, though in some ways perplexing, story.

In the essay on "Biography: True and False" with which Marchesa Origio opens her book she prescribes a code of conduct for the biographer, whose virtues are to be veracity and enthusiasm, and whose temptations are suppression, invention (ie, fabrication), and lac-

ting in judgment. I suppose one ought to measure Origio, a very distinguished practitioner against her own requirements; and one can instantly acquit her of fabrication. About suppression, or anyway reservation, on a mild scale, I am not quite so sure. Occasionally she tells half a story, of which we might reasonably require the rest. For example, we are not told exactly what went wrong between Salvemini and his second wife Fernande Luchaire, so that, when she asked friends if she should rejoin him after the war, they advised against it. Or rather, we know what (most catastrophically) went wrong — her son Jean, by her earlier marriage, became a leading collaborator with the Nazis in France and was eventually executed — but we are not told what passed between her and Salvemini. There are some puzzling questions, too, about the de Bosis affair, though maybe the answers are not to be found.

As for enthusiasm, Origio is a bit reverential, in the manner more often reserved for royalty. Thus de Bosis's motive in taking courses in chemistry, philosophy and anthropology is described as "an intense interest in the evolution of modern science". She also tends to hand out testimonials. And when it comes to apportioning the beans (such beans as there are, and they are not very grave) about Ruth Draper, she leaves it partly to Joyce Grenfell ("My diary records that I gave her a hug and said: 'I don't know how anyone dares mention my name with yours' and she said 'They don't'"), and partly also to the device of quoting anonymous critics in order to flatter

with them. "Sometimes her more critical friends wondered if in so much enthusiasm (for royalty, and the suchlike grand generally) there was not a certain lack of discrimination. But now I think they were mistaken: it was Ruth who ended by seeing most." The truth is, Origio is writing about friends and is protective in certain directions — which is absolutely proper, only it is not the method of her heroes Orwell and Carlyle.

A Need to Testify is certainly absorbing, for Origio is a masterly narrator — most visibly of all in her account of de Bosis. This gifted young poet, author of a verse drama about Icarus, was for a few years much in demand as an international cultural and financial go-between on behalf of the Fascists, becoming in 1928 Executive Secretary of the Italy-American Society of New York — a rather sinister fascist front organization dominated by the J. P. Morgan banking house. That he should have undergone a conversion to liberalism and, in 1931, while on leave in Italy, should have set up a clandestine anti-fascist chila-letter organization (the *Alleanza Nazionale*), is clearly heroic. But how explain the appalling false move which follows? He resigns from the Italy-American Society but applies to the Italian ambassador for approval of two new appointments — as Italian representative of something called the Institute of International Education, and as trustee of a cultural foundation ("The Westinghouse") set up for him by an elderly Chicago millionaire — and is manoeuvred by the ambassador into accepting, in writing, that

he wishes "still to be used in Italy to serve the country and fascism". The consequences of this. Crossing to Europe on the *Mauretania*, he hears that his collaborators on the *Alleanza Nazionale*, among them his mother, have been arrested; and at their trial three weeks later he is called to the witness stand and reads out a letter to the ambassador in Rome, his first genuine damage to his own name, his first situation (two were tortured and given life-year jail sentences) and the anti-fascist movement generally. His Origio can only vaguely wonder as we, what can have prompted him to this disastrous step. According to Salvemini, already before the arrest of the *Alleanza*, he was planning his "leaving" flight over Rome, so what sense, quite, does make of those years with the Institute and the "Westinghouse"? Again, though he aimed to defeat fascism by nullifying all the conservative forces in his country, he privately described the monarchy as the Vatican, with fascists, as the "plagues of Italy", to be eliminated one by another. One detects some deep muddle, some painful confusion over expediency, and one would like to know more, if more could be discovered, about his entanglement with the business. His "The Story of My Death" covers, and if Arthur Marder, one of the greatest historians of the century, is to be placed at the apex, Padfield's place is certainly well above the middle. His prose is fluent and clear, and his work is documented with great thoroughness. Before criticizing it we should remember what an extraordinarily difficult subject he has chosen. Naval history, which

... The mantle of D'Annunzio was falling in 1931.

T Remainders

Eric Korn

Relentless in pursuit of the perfect book, I went last month to Malta. It wasn't there, the perfect book, but besides the megalithic and baroque splendours (Maltese architecture, like some somnolent cactus, flowers every five thousand years) I was unexpectedly charmed and bewildered by linguistic and semiotic strangeness.

For Malta is one of those curious blind countries where a highly literate people is daily confronted with a world of alien texture, a land where the idiom of the people is scarcely represented by the printed, screened and transmitted word.

You need to live in a fairly remote hedgerow in England not to be wrapped in language – the words of posters, packets, instructions on the can and guarantees on the sauce-bottle – while the Londoner or the New Yorker must have millions of words a day reinforcing his vocabulary, pre-empting any other sensory input (which is perhaps the reason city dwellers have no sense of smell).

But in Malta I had again that sad, weird sensation of disjunction that you get in Welsh Wales, in the Basque country, in the wrong parts of Belgium, in Quebec, though less now than ten years ago, the sensation that the eye and the ear are tuned to different programmes.

Of course, all Maltese speak English, but they do not talk it. So while one listens to a charming and unfamiliar Semitic-Romance Mid-Med medley, one sees only Persil and Bristolpad and Major Road Ahead and Computer and Video News and This Way Up and Please Knock.

Of course there are fields where Maltese dominates: religious and political announcements, for instance, Church and Government in alliance for once (though the opposition press refuses to print the radio and television schedules of Xandir Malta), poetry, folksong and countless newspapers, official forms,

police and parish notice-boards, elementary textbooks, even one comic (called *Il-Komik*: Klavij Heqql Ajmal Jagawli), the occasional monolingual, xenophobic "wet paint" sign (ABJAD FRISK if I read right).

But despite modern law-cost duplicating methods, letter-heads and shop signs, invoices, road signs, wipe your feet, adjust your dress, remain in English only. Why couldn't Leyland, when they were refurbishing the plucky little buses that run everywhere like green corpuscles ("buses leave Hal Far every hour on the half hour") find a bilingual sign-painter to translate Only Three Standing, Box For Used Tickets? Some, I discovered later, do have the latter: it's KAXXA OHALL BILJETI WZA-TI give or take a few diacritical dots and dashes that the TLS doesn't carry, any more than most local typewriters, another of the burdens of being a minority language. Spoken, it's more comprehensible than it looks.

All of this is plainly a new-camer's reaction; the Maltese don't in general feel linguistically colonized or neo-colonized: English is our language too, they insist. At the theatre this week *Deathtrap*; next week Emyln Williams's *Il-Lejl jasal Zgħir*. If the bus-drivers wanted bilingual or monolingual NO STANDING signs they would have made them, with a fraction of the effort that goes into installing and decorating the shrines at Madonna-grooves above each driving compartment: VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST picked out in a handsome rounded script, a blend of *lettre bâtarde* and Greengrocer's Full-serif Swollen Orblimey; the few pagan drivers had HAPPY FOR EVER or MANCHESTER UNITED or indeed just LEYLAND, similarly calligraphic. On one windscreen I counted twenty-five stickers with apitinal, commercial or sporting exhortations in English, German, Italian, Latin, wordless (Tottenham Hotspurs group photograph), even two in Maltese.

I took with me, for protection and as conversation-starter, Joseph Aquilina's impressive but visionary *Tenx Yourself Maltese* (En-

glish Universities Press, 1965 and later); by exercise 4 we should be able to say "the man is cruel and quarrelsome, but his wife is bashful and diligent", and form diminutives like *zappima*, a small maddock. I made very little progress.

Like the islands themselves, the Maltese language takes its superstructure from the north shore of the Mediterranean, its geology from the south. The rocky grammatical base is Semitic (though the great overhanging mess of verbal paradigms have been worn down to rounded hillocks), while the vocabulary commemorates every European who blew in and out as conqueror or merchant-Catalan and Sicilian, the borrowings of a century and a half of British rule, millennia of the Raman Church. There is a widespread romantic belief that the Semitic core is not Arabic but something earlier: Punic or proto-Canaanite or some Hamitic tongue, Ancient Egyptian or Libyco-Berber. After all the Arab Conquest lasted only from 870 to 1090, when the Muslims were expelled or at least subdued by Roger the Norman. (And what did he speak, by the way? Sicilian? Old French? Norse?)

Modern Libyans stress the arabicity of the language to the sceptical Maltese; Europeans will find a mixture of the familiar and the unpronounceable. Good Evening, Thank You, Please are respectively *Bonsaw, Grazi* and *Jekk Joghħobki*; a restaurant offers *Timbale, Ravjul* and *Ross-ill-form*; there is a poster appeal about the "important" suggestion: *Il-Budget* from the *Assocjazzjoni tas-Self-Employed*.

The cadences of the language are almost wholly Italianate. Arabic gutturals are reduced (except of course in Gozo, as Stephen Potter might have said) and all those q's and gh's (the h has an extra crosspiece, which in our case we have not got) which make written Maltese look so ferocious, are silent to the English ear and only inserted for fun, like curranis in a currant bun. Thus *gh'ghed* is just *Ed*, or rather glottal-stop *Ed*, and all kinds of entertaining sight rhymes and non-rhymes are possible. Luca Airport, the first stop unless you take St Paul's route (shipwrecked in Mellieħa Bay), is the starting point for limericks less indecent than I had supposed, thus:

There was a young lady of Luqa
Whose beauty made men wish to scruga
or even
Whose lovers grew fuqa and fuqa.
The intervening lines (which might contain some reference to making a Maltese cross) should present no difficulty.

(Enter *Ms Ge Polter*, wrath): Why are all your limericks, say all limericks, preoccupied with the verbal or physical abuse of women? *Myself* (sheepishly): Don't blame me, but the genius of the English language, which provides innumerable rhymes for "her" or rather "er", employing the neutral vowel or schwa, thus... (dreamily)

Once knew a young lady called Schewna
Who was charming and fetching and clever
Ms G. P.: That's enough
Of this chauvinist stuff
Me: I think I could go on for ever.

Perhaps with something about the Archbishop of Gozo. But you can't change the ever-interesting topic of the limerick, any more than you can change human na.

Ms G. P.: I'm starting a group for persuading 'em That Women (with righteous meo aiding 'em) Could stamp out this form
Whose role-model norm
Is exploiting or otherwise degrading 'em

But the silent q gave me my most magical moment in Malta, which came when I was belag given a lift back up the stiff climb from the Inland Sea (more like an Inland Pond, actually) in a truck with two large native dogs. "Nice dogs," I said, insincerely. "Yes, I use for hunting." "What do you hunt with them?" "Wholes." "???" "Yes, uails and duffs."

There was a similarly surreal linguistic moment concerning marine mammals provided by the *Times of Malta*, though the credit should probably go to a wire service. This was a report that an "animal liberation" movement had broken into a Hamburg laboratory and released 500 or maybe 5,000 porpoises. I had a wonderful image of an endless column of cetaceans (*Phocaena communis*, actually, and thereby hangs an epigram) flopping porpoise-fully seaward through St Paul's, terrorizing the

hush-keepers and their clients all down the Reepie rhabu, until a suspicious dawning that German for "porpoise" and the German "guinea pig" were teasingly similar.

The local archiepiscopal categorizes foreign films as admirable, acceptable, partly or wholly harmful: "skabruz", "diskutibbli", "harmfuli". It addresses believers in Maltese tourists in their vernacular: "Personnes velle de laccun curriere, evitundu assoluement nillu in decenti, elensuvenig hot-pants."

The ancient stonics are silent too: If the perplexing new dating is correct, they are a thousand years older than the earliest Sumerian. What would these splendid sedate *One Mathers*, with their sturdy shoulders, *infinit thighs* and absurd dull's peg-legs, say to us, in that language, if they could speak? It would surely be something polite, for they don't look in the least like fertility symbols, and one of them is without question Queen Victoria, Imperial Indian sash and all. Others lie on couches: are they dreaming, meditating, migrating, or simply votive offerings with many diseases? There's one the Archaeological Museum calls, precisely enough, "Intaglio Object On Couch", while Michael Riley (*Megalithic Art of the Maltese Islands*, Dolphin Press) calls it "Carving of Fish on a Boat". Likewise, *Mgr Dr Anthony Gauci*, author of *Gozo* (St Joseph's Home Printing Press, Haerun, 1969), who is stronger on menology and ecclesiastical interiors than on dendrochronology, seems to have special sources of information about what went on at Ggantija: "In the two depressions on the ground they washed the white doves used for the sacrifice." *White doves*, Monsignor? That's in the passage which leads to the chamber with the snake (*Ridgely*) now in Gozo museum; Gauci supplies a surreal inventory: "3. On a shelf (in the corner) a showoff suckling *Romulus* and *Remus*. A grecoroman artistic head of a youth, *caput* old bronze leg. d) An inscription of unknown age." I asked about the very old leg, which seemed to be absent, and the guardian indicated clearly the sound "Plour", with his expressive shrug: but I don't know what it pressed. Perhaps something along the lines: "You know how it is, sir, these old bronze legs have a habit of walking."

Perhaps the explanation of the plethra of effluent temples – if temples it is – they are – is the primeval working of the emulation effect, or the Xowkija Factor, a mysterious dynamic that drove the inhabitants of Xowkija (say it "Choux qu'il y'n"), a village on Gozo, to haggard themselves for decades to build a church vast beyond the population or their needs, but with a dome bigger than that in Mostor, a smallish town in Malta with the third, now the fourth highest domed building in Europe, if not the known Universe.

But who has put flowers in the ancient bowl at ruined Mgarr? And what was meant by go there? Has anyone analysed that ancient incrustation in the underground temple at *Il-Fa* Saffien to see if it is dried blood, *white* fermented hallucinogenic mushroom? It remains infinitely diskutibbli.

And what about perfect books? Well, there were books, mostly theological, most recent and mostly incomplete, mostly inaccessible in the back rooms of antiquarians: but the bookworms, I mean the *bookworms*, had a 200-year start on me. The book I most wanted to find was a new *Gozian Wile and Humour* by N. E. A. *Humour* author of *Israue My Legs, Please*, which was annihilatingly reviewed in the *local Times* ("most jokes fall flat and many seem lacking the punchline... no redeeming social value... incredible number of typos, misprints, unnecessary question marks... seems to have been translated through many languages... but the new-book sellers of Malta (and Gozo too, to be fair), when they had *laughing*, denied all knowledge of it.

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Letters

'Aristotle to Zoos'

Sir, – It so happened that I was reading James G. Lennon's defence of Aristotle (Letters, March 30) in an interval of studying what appears to me one of the most successful accounts of the history of any scientific discipline I have ever come across, Ernst Mayr's *The Growth of Biological Thought* (1982). There I read:

The idea that the universe could have developed from an original chaos, or that higher organisms could have evolved from lower ones, was totally alien to Aristotle's thought. To repeat, Aristotle was opposed to evolution of any kind... The evolutionary position of Aristotle was of decisive importance for the development of the next two thousand years, considering Aristotle's enormous influence during that period.

It was indeed, because it also dominated Aristotle's thought on moral and political matters, whose influence was even more fatal than that on biology. His belief that only that was moral which was necessary to maintain the existing population, that the population of no state should be greater than the numbers the voice of a herald could reach, and the dislike of all economic gain, which through Thomas Aquinas became the dominant attitude to economic matters of the Middle Ages, has been falsely excused with the allegation that Aristotle could not have been aware of the degree to which the very existence of a city like Athens was wholly based on economic growth because he could not yet have observed the functioning of the market. To allege this of a city in which one of his contemporaries, the writer of comedies Euboulos, has left us the following description of the Agora is just ridiculous: "You'll find at Athens things of all sorts and shapes for sale in the self-same place, figs, summoners, grapes, turnips, pears, op-ops, witnesses, sausages, huneombs, roses, medians, and chickpeas, myrtles, lambs, bluebells, laws, impeachments, [water] clocks, lawsuits, curds, beesstings, and the ballot box" (J. M. Edwards translation, 1959). The fact is simply that Aristotle thought in purely stationary terms and intensely disliked in particular any economic change.

F. A. HAYEK.
Urachstrasse 27, D-7800 Freiburg (Breisgau), German Federal Republic.

NSC and NUC

Sir, – Robin Alstun's generous review (April 6) of the first volume of the *Nineteenth Century Short Title Catalogue* takes as "typical" the entry for

BARROW, John Sir, Bart. 1764-1848
An Account of Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa...

NSC lists four editions, including one translation, culled from the catalogues of the five British and one Irish library on which it is based. For the same work the *National Union Catalogue, Pre-1956 Imprints* has entries for editions published in 1801 London; 1801-4 London; 1802 New York; 1802 Philadelphia; 1806 London (2nd edition, with additions and alterations – including a revised title); 1807 London (abridgement by W. Mavor). The following translations are listed: 1801 Paris, *French* trs L. Degrandpre; 1801 Weimar, *German* trs M. C. Sprengel; 1805 Vienna, *German* trs J. A. Bergk; 1805-6 Weimar; 1806 Paris. Locations for the eleven editions listed are given in forty-three libraries in North America and the entries themselves derive from the cataloguing of eight major research libraries, including the Library of Congress where the entire *Pre-1956 NUC* was edited and prepared for publication.

The point of this recital is not to make invidious comparisons between the bibliographic records offered respectively by NSC and the *Pre-1956 NUC*. The *NUC* is far from perfect and it does not enjoy the advantages and attributes of computer-based compilations. But if the quoted entry is indeed typical, it seems that the first volumes of NSC are unlikely to add greatly to the already published, widely accessible, more detailed and perhaps more easily comprehended record of the material which it is concerned, and the achievement – however welcome – of providing a "finding tool" for the holdings of the libraries indexed falls some way short of the ambition that has informed earlier Short Title Catalogues and to which the NSC itself aspires – to comprehend "all books published in Britain, its colonies and the United States of America; all books in English wherever published; and all translations from English".

The task implied by that endeavour is vast, complex and fraught and it has been suggested that NSC is a better alternative than doing nothing. Perhaps. But who the resources available to support major bibliographic projects are under acute pressure there are prudent and practical reasons for ensuring that the best use is made of existing resources and that any new resources that are created provide

The only additional information provided by Haig is that he and the British Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, "worked all day on a new draft". That contradicts the suggestion in Gavshon's book that the relevant Haig-Pym meeting was over by lunchtime on May 2, before the Belgrano was actually sunk.

Gavshon writes that Haig "says flatly in his memoirs that President Fernando Belaunde Terry of Peru 'gained acceptance in principle' from both Argentina and Britain for a simplified peace plan before the attack on the Belgrano". What Haig in fact says (and Gavshon and I both came to have been reading the same *Sunday Telegraph*) is that after Pym and Haig had worked on these proposals all day on May 2 (ie, during the time when the Belgrano was sunk), and after the Peruvian President had encountered a "certain obstinancy" in the Argentinean, "nevertheless, he gained acceptance in principle from both parties, and on May 4 sent an official of the Peruvian Foreign Ministry to Buenos Aires with the new paper."

The distortion of this rather straightforward account to give an impression totally at odds with the one actually provided may give your readers some clue as to Gavshon and Rice's respect for the evidence.
LAWRENCE FREEDMAN,
Department of War Studies, King's College, Strand, London WC2.

Arts Council Cuts

Sir, – I do not know the magazine, but it is self-evidently wrong to say that *Interzone* is "threatened by Arts Council cuts", as Robert Hewison does (Behind the Lines, March 30). If its survival is at stake, it is because – like other "magazines of imaginative writing" – it is unable to sell enough copies to cover costs, make a profit, attract advertisers or whatever. A simple point, but to argue that the Arts Council is now responsible for the magazine's survival is completely to miss the point – or perhaps, inadvertently, to make another.

As soon as such activities move out of the market-place, they become subject to discretionary, not to say arbitrary, decision-making. Would Hewison suggest that all magazines of imaginative writing should be kept in existence? Presumably not, for that would be an invitation to everybody – competent or incompetent – to do as he pleases. A decision has to be made, if funds are to be spent in this manner. It is bound to seem arbitrary, and will certainly offend the individuals concerned. But to evade this important issue and attack the individuals concerned is notoriously the resort of someone with no case to argue.

JOE ROEBER.
13 Great James Street, London WC1.

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The task implied by that endeavour is vast, complex and fraught and it has been suggested that NSC is a better alternative than doing nothing. Perhaps. But who the resources available to support major bibliographic projects are under acute pressure there are prudent and practical reasons for ensuring that the best use is made of existing resources and that any new resources that are created provide

substantial enhancement of those that already exist. Both requirements could be met and the bibliography of the nineteenth century brought under more effective control by taking the *NUC* record as a base against which to compare, and to match or add the relevant records of libraries in Britain and even elsewhere in the world. Reduced to Short Title form and computer-based the product of some such scheme (perhaps co-operatively structured) could provide, at conceivably affordable cost and relatively soon, a comprehensive, well-organized and analytic record based not on the catalogues of a handful of libraries – however eminent – but on the combined and, there is reason to suppose, remarkably complementary holdings of the principal research libraries of the world.
J. E. COMMANDER,
National Union Catalogue, Pre-1956 Imprints, 90-91 Great Russell Street, London WC1.

Matthew Arnold

Sir, – The curious hostility of your reviewer (April 6) to William E. Buckler's brief study of Arnold's criticism in *Matthew Arnold's Prose: Three Essays in Literary Enlargement* deserves, perhaps, a brief comment. This is an American book, and its methods of argument and demonstration, though always close to texts, are not typical of British critical writing just now. If the sky over our heads is not the one Arnold complained of, a sky of brass and iron, why does your reviewer misuse the word "Deconstructionist" and write as though it fresh, foreign approach to Arnold were unintelligible? Buckler is explicit on Eliot's and Tilling's effects on Arnold's reputation. Your reviewer concludes that Buckler sees an "unnamed Deconstructionist" influence on the reputation. Buckler discusses Arnold's language, as an un pp 62-3. Your reviewer remarks that "in a book on Arnold's prose" the "question of his language might at some point be touched upon". The book does not seem to have been closely read.

PARK HONAN,
School of English, University of Leeds.

The Hogarth Press

Sir, – In the anthracite outbreak your paper arrives a little late but we still could taste the bubble in Jennifer Uglow's closing remark about the revival of the Hogarth Press (March 2). She writes that "the new Hogarth" has "not an author... who is not on the attack... against the docile agreement with accepted views". Does a press with such eminent, literary family origins and "authors, from Proust to Pritchett" forming "the heart of the first flat" and "continuing 'to do so' not conform to 'accepted views' in 1984? Not accepted by whom? Where? At least here in Pottsville we are by now enlightened enough to be in utterly "docile agreement with accepted views" of Woolf and Co. And we thought everyone was, except perhaps such folks as our John O'Hara portrayed long ago. Nevertheless, we wish the new Hogarth good fortune in its revolutionary venture.

CHARLES CANTALUPO,
RD #4, Box 4366, Pottsville, Pennsylvania 17901.

'Poetry Introduction 6'

Sir, – In the Spring of 1985 Faber and Faber intend to publish *Poetry Introduction 6*. This series is designed to be a showcase for young poets who have not previously appeared in book form. Each poet is represented by a selection of ten to fifteen poems. Well-known poets who first appeared in the *Poetry Introduction* series include Douglas Dunn, Tom Paulin, Ian Hamilton and Paul Muldoon. Submissions are invited. The closing date is July 31, 1984.
CRAIG RAINE,
Faber and Faber Ltd, 3 Queen Square, London WC1.

The third annual Translation Prize competition has recently been announced by the British Comparative Literature Association. First and second prizes of £100 and £50 are offered for English translations of poetry, fiction, drama or literary prose from any language, entries (maximum 25 pages of typescript) to be submitted by October 1. Further details may be had from Professor Arthur Terry, Department of Literature, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO3 3SQ.

Basil Blackwell

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THE BODLEY HEAD

Remainders

Eric Korn

Relentless in pursuit of the perfect book, I went last month to Malta. It wasn't there, the perfect book, but besides the megalithic and baroque splendours (Maltese architecture, like some somnolent eacus, flowers every five thousand years) I was unexpectedly charmed and bewildered by linguistic and semiotic strangeness.

For Malta is one of those curious blind countries where a highly literate people is daily confronted with a world of fallen texture, a land where the idiom of the people is scarcely represented by the printed, screened and transmitted word.

You need to live in a fairly remote hedgerow in England not to be wropped in language – the words of posters, packets, instructions on the can and guarantees on the sauce-bottle – while the Londoner or the New Yorker must have millions of words a day reinforcing his vocabulary, pre-empting any other sensory input (which is perhaps the reason city dwellers have no sense of smell).

But in Malta I had again that sad, weird sensation of disjunction that you get in Welsh Wales, in the Basque country, in the wrong parts of Belgium, in Quebec, though less now than ten years ago, the sensation that the eye and the ear are tuned to different programmes.

Of course, all Maltese speak English; but they do not talk it. So while one listens to a charming and unfamiliar Semitic-Romance Mid-Med melody, one sees only Persil and Brillapad and Major Road Ahead and Computer and Video News and This Way Up and Please Knock.

Of course there are fields where Maltese dominates: religious and political announcements, for instance, Church and Government in alliance for once (though the opposition press refuses to print the radio and television schedules of Xandir Malta), poetry, folksong and countless newspapers, official forms,

police and parish notice-boards, elementary textbooks, even one comic (called *Il-Konnik*: Kiang! Heqq! Aymal Jaqawl), the occasional monolingual xenophobic "wet paint" sign (ABJAD FRISK if I read aright).

But despite modern low-cost duplicating methods, letter-heads and shop signs, invoices, road signs, wipe your feet, adjust your dress, remain in English only. Why couldn't Leyland, when they were furnishing the plucky little buses that run everywhere like green corpuscles ("buses leave Hal Far every hour on the half hour") find a bilingual sign-painter to translate Only Three Standing, Box For Used Tickets? Some, I discovered later, do have the latter: it's KAXXA GHALL BILJETI WZA-TI give or take a few diacritical dots and dashes that the T.L.S. doesn't carry, any more than most local typewriters, another of the burdens of being a minority language. Spoken, it's more comprehensible than it looks.

All of this is plainly a newcomer's reaction; the Maltese don't in general feel linguistically colonized or neo-colonized: English is our language too, they insist. At the theatre this week *Deathtrap*; next week Emlyn Williams's *Il-Lejl Jasal Zgur*. If the bus-drivers wanted bilingual or monolingual NO STANDING signs they would have made them, with a fraction of the effort that goes into installing and decorating the shrines or Madonna-grooves above each driving compartment: VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST picked out in a handsome rounded script, a blend of *lettre bâtarde* and Greengrocer's Full-serif Swollen Gorbliney; the few pagan drivers had HAPPY FOR EVER or MANCHESTER UNITED or indeed just LEYLAND, similarly calligraphic. On one windscreen I counted twenty-five stickers with spiritual, commercial or sporting exhortations in English, German, Italian, Latin, wordless (Tottenham Hotspurs group photograph), even two in Maltese.

I took with me, for protection and as conversation-starter, Joseph Aquilina's impressive but visionary *Teach Yourself Maltese* (En-

glish Universities Press, 1965 and later); by exercise 4 we should be able to say "the man is cruel and quarrelsome, but his wife is bashful and diligent", and form diminutives like *zappina*, a small mattock. I made very little progress.

Like the islands themselves, the Maltese language takes its superstructure from the north shore of the Mediterranean, its geology from the south. The rocky grammatical base is Semitic (though the great overhanging mesas of verbal paradigms have been worn down to rounded hillocks), while the vocabulary commemorates every European who blew in and out as conqueror or merchant-Catalan and Sicilian, the borrowings of a century and a half of British rule, millennia of the Roman Church. There is a widespread romantic belief that the Semitic core is not Arabic but something earlier: Punic or proto-Canaanite or some Hamitic tongue, Ancient Egyptian or Libyco-Berber. After all the Arab Conquest lasted only from 870 to 1090, when the Muslims were expelled or at least subdued by Roger the Norman. (And what did he speak, by the way? Sicilian? Old French? Norse?)

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There was a young lady of Luqa
Whose beauty made men wish to scrup
or even

Whose lovers grew fupa and fupa.
The intervening lines (which might contain some reference to making a Maltese cross) should present no difficulty.

(Enter *Ms Ge Polter*, *wrath*): Why are all your limericks, nay all limericks, preoccupied with the verbal or physical abuse of women?

Myself (sheepishly): Don't blame me, but the genius of the English language, which provides innumerable rhymes for "her" or rather "er", employing the neutral vowel or schwa, thus, . . . (dreamily)

I once knew a young lady called Schwa
Who was charming and fetchlog and clever
Ms G. P.: That's enough
Of this chauvinist stuff!

Me: I think I could go on for ever.

Perhaps with something about the Archbishop of Gozo. But you can't change the ever-interesting topic of the limerick, any more than you can change human na . . .

Ms G. P.: I'm starting a group for persuading 'em That Women (with righteous men aiding 'em) Could stamp out this form.

Whose role-model norm
Is exploiting or otherwise degrading 'em

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There was a similarly surreal linguistic moment concerning marine mammals provided by the *Times of Malta*, though the credit should probably go to a wire service. This was a report that an animal liberation movement had broken into a Hamburg laboratory and released 500 or maybe 5,000 porpoises. I had a wonderful image of an endless column of cetaceans (*Phocaena communis*, actually, and thereby hangs an epigram) flopping porpoise-fully seaward through St Paul's, terrorizing the

brotherkeepers and their clients all down the Reeperbohn, until a suspicion dawned that the German for "porpoise" and the German for "guineapig" were teasingly similar.

The local orchiopiscopate categorizes foreign films as admirable, acceptable, partly or wholly harmful: "skabroz", "diskutibbli", "lingwagg volgar". It addresses believers in Maltese, tourists in their vernacular: "Personnes vetues de bacon correcte, evitando assolutamente abiti indecenti, ebensowenig hot-pants."

The ancient stones are silent too: if the perplexing new dating is correct, they are a thousand years older than the earliest Sumerian. What would those splendid sedate Great Mothers, with their sturdy shoulders, inflated thighs and absurd doll's peg-legs, say to us, and in what language, if they could speak? It would surely be something polite, for they don't look in the least like fertility symbols, and one of them is without question Queen Victoria, imperial Indian sash and all. Others lie on couches: are they dreaming, meditating, transmuting, or simply votive offerings with nasty diseases? There's one the Archaeological Museum calls, precisely enough, "Irregular Object On Couch", while Michael Ridley (*Megalithic Art of the Maltese Islands*, Dolphin Press) calls it "Carving of Fish on a Bed". Likewise, Mgr Dr Anthony Gauci, author of *Gozo* (St Joseph's Home Printing Press, Hamrun, 1969), who is stronger on meoology and ecclesiastical interiors than on dendrochronology, seems to have special sources of information about what went on at Ggantija: "In the two depressions on the ground they washed the white doves used for the sacrifice". White doves, Monsignor? That's in the passage which leads to the chamber with the snake (Ridley: eel) now in Gozo museum; Gauci supplies a surreal inventory: "3. On a shelf in the corner, a) A shewolf auckling Romulus and Remus, b) A grecoroman artist's head of a youth, c) a very old bronze leg, d) An inscription of unknown age."

I asked about the very old leg, which seemed to be absent, and the guardian articulated clearly the sound "Plout", with an expressive shrug: but I don't know what it expressed. Perhaps something along the lines of "You know how it is, sir, these old bronze legs have a habit of walking."

Perhaps the explanation of the great plethora of ancient temples – if temples is what they are – is the primeval working of the emulatio effect, or the Xewkija Factor, the mysterious dynamic that drove the inhabitants of Xewkija (soy it "Choux qu'il y a"), a largely village on Gozo, to beggar themselves for decades to build a church vast beyond their population or their needs, but with a dome bigger than that in Mostar, a smallish town in Malta with the third, now the fourth hugest-domed building in Europe, if not the known Universe.

But who has put flowers in the ancient stone bowl at ruined Mgarr? And what was ioetan to go there? Has anyone analysed that smoky incrustation in the underground temple at Hal Safien to see if it is dried blood, wine or fermented hallucinogenic mushroom? It remains infinitely diskutibbli.

And what about perfect books? Well, no. There were books, mostly theological, mostly recent and mostly incomplete, mostly stacked inaccessible in the back rooms of antique dealers: but the bookworms, I mean the genuine bookworms, had a 200-year start on me, reducing everything remotely desirable to macerated. The book I most wanted to find was a new one, *Gozitan Wit and Humour* by N. E. Atkinson, author of *Insure My Legs, Please*, which was annihilatingly reviewed in the local *Times* ("most jokes fall flat and many seem lacking the punchline . . . no redeeming social value . . . incredible number of typos, misprints and unnecessary question marks . . . seems to have been translated through many languages . . . but the paw-book sellers of Malta (and Gozo too, to be fair), when they had stopped laughing, denied all knowledge of it").

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Letters

'Aristotle to Zoos'

Sir, – It so happened that I was reading James G. Lennox's defence of Aristotle (Letters, March 30) in an interval of studying what appears to me one of the most successful accounts of the history of any scientific discipline I have ever come across, Ernst Mayr's *The Growth of Biological Thought* (1982). There I read:

The idea that the universe could have developed from an original chaos, or that higher organisms could have evolved from lower ones, was totally alien to Aristotle's thought. To repeat, Aristotle was opposed to evolution of any kind . . . The anti-evolutionary position of Aristotle was of decisive importance for the development of the next two thousand years, considering Aristotle's enormous influence during that period.

It was indeed, because it also dominated Aristotle's thought on moral and political matters, whose influence was even more fatal than that on biology. His belief that only that was moral which was necessary to maintain the existing population, that the population of no state should be greater than the numbers the voice of a herald could reach, and the dislike of all economic gain, which through Thomas Aquinas became the dominant attitude to economic matters of the Middle Ages, has been falsely excused with the allegation that Aristotle could not have been aware of the degree to which the very existence of a city like Athens was wholly based on economic growth because he could not yet have observed the functioning of the market. To allege this of a city in which one of his contemporaries, the writer of comedies Euboulos, has left us the following description of the Agora is just ridiculous: "You'll find at Athens things of all sorts and shapes for sale in the self-same place, figs, summoners, grapes, turnips, pears, apples, witnesses, sausages, honeycombs, roses, medlars, and chickpeas, myrtles, lambs, bluebells, laws, impeachments, [water] docks, law suits, curds, beesstings, and the ballot box" (J. M. Edwards translation, 1959). The fact is simply that Aristotle thought in purely stationary terms and is (openly) disliked in particular any economic change.

F. A. HAYEK, Urachstrasse 27, D-7800 Freiburg (Breisgau), German Federal Republic.

'The Sinking of the Belgrano'

Sir, – It is quite outrageous for Arthur Gavshon (Letters, April 13) to call Alexander Haig in evidence in support of his increasingly desperate efforts to maintain a sense of scandal surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano. For a start, the former Secretary of State's account of his shuttle diplomacy during the course of April contradicts the sense of the unreasonableness of the British position and the reasonableness of that of Argentina which Gavshon, and his colleague Desmond Rice, seek to cooey in their book.

On the question of the Belgrano, nobody has denied that the sinking had an adverse effect on the Junta's deliberations, so Haig's confirmation of this comes as no surprise. The question, as I keep on trying to remind Gavshon, is whether this effect was intended by the British Government when authorizing the sinking.

The only additional information provided by Haig is that he and the British Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, "worked all day on a new draft". That contradicts the suggestion in Gavshon's book that the relevant Haig-Pym meeting was over by lunchtime on May 2, before the Belgrano was actually sunk.

Gavshon writes that Haig "says flatly in his memoirs that President Fernando Belaunde Terry of Peru 'gained acceptance in principle' from both Argentina and Britain for a simplified peace plan before the attack on the Belgrano". What Haig in fact says (and Gavshon and I both seem to have been reading the same *Sunday Telegraph*) is that after Pym and Haig had worked on these proposals all day on May 2 (ie, during the time the Belgrano was sunk), and after the Peruvian President had acquiesced to a "certain obstinance" in the Argentinians, "nevertheless, he gained acceptance in principle from both parties, and on May 3 sent an official of the Peruvian Foreign Ministry to Buenos Aires with the new paper."

The distortion of this rather straightforward account to give an impression totally at odds with the one actually provided may give your readers some clue as to Gavshon and Rice's respect for the evidence. LAWRENCE FREEDMAN, Department of War Studies, King's College, Strand, London WC2.

Arts Council Cuts

Sir, – I do not know the magazine, but it is self-evidently wrong to say that *Huerzone* is "threatened by Arts Council cuts", as Robert Hewison does (Behind the Lines, March 30). If its survival is at stake, it is because – like other "magazines of imaginative writing" – it is unable to sell enough copies to cover costs, make a profit, attract advertisers or whatever. A simple point, but to argue that the Arts Council is now responsible for the magazine's survival is completely to miss the point – or perhaps, inadvertently, to make another.

As soon as such activities move out of the market-place, they become subject to discretionary, not to say arbitrary, decision-making. Would Hewison suggest that all magazines of imaginative writing should be kept in existence? Presumably not, for that would be an invitation to everybody – competent or incompetent – to claim support. A decision has to be made, if funds are to be spent in this manner. It is bound to seem arbitrary, and will certainly offend the individuals concerned. But to evade this important issue and attack the individuals concerned is notoriously the resort of someone with no ease to argue.

JOE ROEBER, 13 Great James Street, London WC1.

NSTC and NUC

Sir, – Robin Alston's generous review (April 6) of the first volume of the *Nineteenth Century Short Title Catalogue* takes as "typical" the entry for

BARROW, John Sir. Bart. 1764-1848
An Account of Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa . . .

NSTC lists four editions, including one translation, culled from the catalogues of the five British and one Irish library on which it is based. For the same work the *National Union Catalogue*, *Pre-1956* has entries for editions published in 1801 London; 1801-4 London; 1802 New York; 1802 Philadelphia; 1806 London (2nd edition, with additions and alterations – including a revised title); 1807 London (abridgement by W. Mavor). The following translations are listed: 1801 Paris, *French* trs L. Degrandpre; 1801 Weimar, *German* trs M. C. Sprengel; 1805 Vienna, *German* trs J. A. Berzig; 1805-6 Weimar; 1806 Paris. Locations for the eleven editions listed are given in forty-three libraries in North America and the entries themselves derive from the cataloguing of eight major research libraries, including the Library of Congress where the entire *Pre-1956 NUC* was edited and prepared for publication.

The point of this recital is not to make invidious comparisons between the bibliographic records offered respectively by NSTC and the *Pre-1956 NUC*. The *NUC* is far from perfect and it does not enjoy the advantages and attributes of computer-based compilations. But if the quoted entry is indeed typical, it seems that the first volumes of NSTC are unlikely to add greatly to the already published, widely accessible, more detailed and perhaps more easily comprehended record of the material with which it is concerned, and the achievement – however welcome – of providing a "finding tool" for the holdings of the libraries indexed falls some way short of the ambition that has informed earlier Short Title Catalogues and to which the NSTC itself aspires – to comprehend "all books published in Britain, its colonies and the United States of America; all books in English wherever published, and all translation from English".

The task implied by that endeavour is vast, complex and fraught and it has been suggested that NSTC is a better alternative than doing nothing. Perhaps. But when the resources available to support major bibliographic projects are under acute pressure there are practical and practical reasons for ensuring that the best use is made of existing resources and that any new resources that are created provide

substantial enhancement of those that already exist. Both requirements could be met and the bibliography of the nineteenth century brought under more effective control by taking the NUC record as a base against which to compare, and to match or add the relevant records of libraries in Britain and even elsewhere in the world. Reduced to Short Title form and computer-based the product of some such scheme (perhaps co-operatively structured) could provide, at conceivably affordable cost and relatively soon, a comprehensive, well-organized and analytic record based not on the catalogues of a handful of libraries – however eminent – but on the combined and, there is reason to suppose, remarkably complementary holdings of the principal research libraries of the world. J. E. COMMANDEER, National Union Catalogue, Pre-1956 Imprints, 90-91 Great Russell Street, London WC1.

Matthew Arnold

Sir, – The curious hostility of your reviewer (April 6) to William E. Buckler's brief study of Arnold's criticism in *Matthew Arnold's Prose: Three Essays in Literary Enlargement* deserves, perhaps, a brief comment. This is an American book, and its methods of argument and demonstration, though always close to texts, are not typical of British critical writing just now. If the sky over our heads is not the one Arnold complained of, a sky of brass and iron, why does your reviewer misuse the word "Deconstructionism" and write as though a fresh, foreign approach to Arnold were unintelligible? Buckler is explicit on Eliot's and Tilling's effects on Arnold's reputation. Your reviewer concludes that Buckler sees an "unnamed Deconstructionist" influence on the reputation. Buckler discusses Arnold's language, as on pp 62-3. Your reviewer remarks that "in a book on Arnold's prose" the "question of his language might at some point be touched upon". The book does not seem to have been closely read.

PARK HONAN, School of English, University of Leeds.

The Hogarth Press

Sir, – In the anthracite outback your paper arrives a little late but we still could taste the bubble in Jennifer Uglow's closing remark about the revival of the Hogarth Press (March 2). She writes that "the new Hogarth" has "not an author . . . who is out on the attack . . . against the docile agreement with accepted views". Does a press with such eminent, literary family origins and "authors, from Proust to Pritchett" forming "the heart of the first list" and "continuing 'to do so' not conform to 'accepted views' in 1984? Not accepted by whom? Where? At least here to Pottsville we are by now enlightened enough to be in utterly "docile agreement with accepted views" of Woolf and Co. And we thought everyone was, except perhaps such folks as our John O'Hara portrayed long ago. Nevertheless, we wish the new Hogarth good fortune in its revolutionary venture.

CHARLES CANTALUPO, RD #4, Box 4366, Pottsville, Pennsylvania 17901.

'Poetry Introduction 6'

Sir, – In the Spring of 1985 Faber and Faber intend to publish *Poetry Introduction 6*. This series is designed to be a showcase for young poets who have not previously appeared in book form. Each poet is represented by a selection of ten to fifteen poems. Well-known poets who first appeared in the *Poetry Introduction* series include Douglas Dunn, Tim Paulin, Ian Hamilton and Paul Muldoon. Submissions are invited. The closing date is July 31, 1984.

CRAIG RAINE, Faber and Faber Ltd, 3 Queen Square, London WC1.

The third annual Translation Prize competition has recently been announced by the British Comparative Literature Association. First and second prizes of £100 and £50 are offered for English translations of poetry, fiction, drama or literary prose from any language, entries (maximum 25 pages of typescript) to be submitted by October 1. Further details may be had from Professor Arthur Terry, Department of Literature, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO3 3SQ.

Basil Blackwell

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This book originated from a conversation with John Paul II. In a series of meetings with him at Rome and at Castel Gandolfo, I had his permission to put to him more than seventy questions. The result of this long conversation is this book: partly an autobiographical sketch, partly a confession of faith and an exposition of doctrine – in all of which a pope, for the first time, says "I" and explains his own beliefs. André Frossard

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FICTION

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THE BODLEY HEAD

COMMENTARY

Struggle among the seedlings

Frances Spalding

Cedric Morris
Tate Gallery
Arthur Lett-Haines
Redfern Gallery

Portraits, double hung, fill two entire walls in the Cedric Morris exhibition. They make a strident group, each having the unadulterated vitality and obsessive insistence that is often found in amateur art exhibitions. The sitters, all in frontal pose, are unsmiling and often dour. They loom towards us, a little grotesque, filling the greater part of the canvas. There is no consistent style employed, but in each case a forceful response, unregulated by professional methods, to the sitter's appearance. A one-off portrait, if set beside their portraits, Morris's sitters would seem pale and ineffectual echoes of themselves. The likeness may be clumsy and gauche but it is never unconvincing: the tall, thin format into which Audrey Debenham is squeezed suggests a restraint which her downward gaze affirms; Richard Chopping is carefully enfolded in a duft coat, thin lines and folds of which expand upon the shapes found in his face. Elsewhere the odd and obtrusive are what catch the eye: character remains secondary to the idiosyncrasies of human appearance. "Humans I regard as an unpredictable species of animal", Morris once wryly remarked, adding that their chief interest for him was pictorial.

Shortly before Sir Cedric Morris died in 1982, interest in his work revived, after a neglect lasting some forty years. He had begun painting seriously in 1919, at the age of thirty, and was largely self-taught. He enjoyed success during the inter-war years, having four one-man exhibitions in London and others abroad. He was also prominent socially in both London and Paris. Then in 1930 he broke with his dealer and moved permanently to the country. In 1937, with his lifelong companion Arthur Lett-Haines, he opened the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing with which he was from then on closely involved. He presumably had private means (he was the son of a prosperous industrialist and in 1947

inherited a baronetcy) and was the strange product of a society whose conventionality and class system he disliked. Passionately democratic in his approach to art, he, for the most part, despised art critics, dealers, stylistic fashions and the over-intellectual. Taste, he thought, was less debauched among the uneducated. All of which explains why this sophisticated, as rare as some of the strains of iris which he bred, developed a style that blurs the division between amateur and professional art: his paintings affront accepted aesthetic standards; they disrupt expectations, perhaps more successfully than some of the more notorious works in the Tate's modern collection.

But at the start of this show Morris is found in uncertain mood. He is aware of Henri Rousseau and the Nabis. He toys with abstraction, with the dreamlike and surreal. These early paintings could be the work of a dilettante, sampling Parisian fashions. Gradually, however, he turns his attention more and more on his everyday surroundings. With thick, opaque paint and dense handling, he gives an intensity to every inch of his large canvas, "From a Bedroom Window at 45 Brook Street". Its muddled view - of the backs of houses, roof-



Cedric Morris's portrait of Lucian Freud (1940), from the Tate exhibition.

tops and chimneys - is recomposed into a close-knit harmony of purples, browns and dull greens. Morris changes his brushstroke according to the object he paints, but he favoured the more blunt touch, reminiscent of Ginner's more claustrophobic, brick-like method, used for similarly prosaic scenes.

"From a Bedroom Window..." aligns Morris with the Seven-and-Five Society, where he won praise from 1926 until 1932, when he resigned membership. The immediacy of his style was a protest against vapid naturalism and the tiredness that clung to much representational art of this period. Like Christopher Wood, a better artist but to whom Morris was something of a mentor, he employed primitive methods to enhance physical reality. What he felt about appearance mattered more than what he saw: drawing, dictated by feeling, resulted in emotive distortion. This his pupil Lucian Freud absorbed, bringing to it a greater subtlety and a more penetrating psychological understanding. Freud's self-portrait, not in this exhibition but currently hanging elsewhere in the Tate, is a near relation of Morris's portrait of Ralph Bunbury, or that of Freud himself.

Morris's influence as teacher at the East Anglian School will surely be the subject of another exhibition. In this present show his strength as an artist emerges most clearly in his mature flower paintings. These are generously proportioned, elegant and unfussy. He painted flowers without sentimentality but succumbed to their magnificence. Locally, he was renowned as a horticulturist and opened his

Educating the imagination

Richard Combs

Life Is a Bed of Roses
Chelsea Cinema

Given the austerity, the intellectual abstraction, that are usually associated with Alain Resnais, the free-form business of *Life Is a Bed of Roses* may come as a surprise. In fact, a poster design for the film pictures its myriad characters, from its three very different but casually intercut stories, jostling round the architectural folly that houses them all like the cast from one of those epic comedies about great races or a mad, mad search for loot. The design, in a way, is fair enough. The film is about the possibility of conjuring up the best of all possible worlds, and characters spend much of their time extolling visions of utopia round the oft-repeated (in fact, oft-sung) catch-phrases of love, happiness and harmony. So the proceedings have, discreetly enough, a certain crazed, antic air. To make this fit with the rest of Resnais requires not just a little effort but, perhaps, a re-adjustment of our notions of the relative importance of theme and story. It has always been assumed that Resnais was too intellectual to want to tell a story, whereas the truth may be that his films are all story, organized on an intellectual principle. If utopianism is the principle of *Life Is a Bed of Roses*, then it may be ideally suited to this exercise: "imagine a perfect world" comes to mean "tell me a story".

There is something recognizably Resnais, at least, about the framing story of Count Michel Forbek (Ruggero Raimondi), the wealthy aristocrat who, on the eve of the First World War, gathers all his friends in a clearing in the Ardennes forest and unveils a model of what will be a remarkable architectural first, a "Temple of Happiness". Here, for the chosen few, all human vanity and misery will be dissolved by potions of forgetfulness, returning the imbibers to the condition of new-born babies, whereupon their five senses will be re-educated in experiences of pure delight. The stylish period décor, the seductive childlike of Forbek's spa retreat, are reminiscent both of *Swan Lake*. Resnais's last essay in the dreams of a historical drop-out, and a number of subjects which he has been unable to film, from Mandrake the Magician to the Marquis de Sade. Something of these "lost" Resnais projects also emerges in the second tale, which opens out of Forbek's. The war intervenes, the Count's fabulous model is shown in

gardens to the public twice a year, at the end of the iris season. Like his artist friend, Jean Nash, he too was associated with the course held at the Field Study Centre, Redmill. His involvement with plants deepened perception and he attributed to them a presence, ruthlessness, arrogance and lack of pity. It is this awareness that banishes any crocheting sweetness in paintings as understated beautiful and inlaid as "Iris Seedlings", painted flowers larger than life, on a scale suggesting that these works express his philosophy. They are, as he once said of flower painting in general, "symbols portraying the eternity of existence... not merely struggle for apprehensions".

For Lett-Haines flowers had more immediate appeal. He combined them with the naked buttocks and breasts, in exotic and erotic compositions of Richard Dadd-like complexity. Elsewhere in his retrospective at the Redfern Gallery he uses techniques associated with Surrealism, creating weird but firm creatures out of bones and other found objects. His art is light, teasing and fantastic. It comes his mercurial character which both inspired Morris and left him slightly harassed. The tension in their relationship dominated the atmosphere at the East Anglian School, even though laughter prevailed. The School also explains why this retrospective has a gap of some twenty years, for Lett-Haines acted as cook and organizer, proving himself indispensable in a way that made dispensable his art.

flames, and suddenly we are plunged into a different kind of chaos, a fairy-tale kingdom rendered comic-strip style, where a war has intervened in the natural order of love, harmony, and the rightful heir to the throne, raised in secret by an ancient retainer.

What keeps this fairy-tale going, appearing in the imagination of a group of children in the third story, set in the present day, when Forbek's castle has been turned into an experimental school, and a group of these have convened for a conference on "Education of the Imagination". These specialists include a utopian architect (Vincent Gasman) and an anthropologist (Gerard Chaplin), but their deliberations on how to improve man's capacity for love and harmony are soon sabotaged by both factional in-fighting and the sexual rancor that is the subtextual business of any conference. Likewise, Forbek's experiment, revived after the war, is to founder on his own erotic misadventures. One of the friends he has induced to drink his fount of forgetfulness (Fanny Ardant), a "princess" of his Temple of Happiness, betrays him by marrying another, and finally both ducks the rebirth Forbek offers and rejects the "rapid sweetness" into which would plunge them all.

As with most of Resnais's work, it would be a mistake to read this interweaved fable too closely at a thematic level. It is tempting to do so, given the uncharacteristically plain nature of the present-day story, which looks most like one of Eric Rohmer's "moral tales", with its admonitory sting in its tail. But the only way the largely disappointed reaction to *Life Is a Bed of Roses* - would have something to do with the triumph of childish imagination (the fairy-tale) over the muddle of adult pretensions for it. Far better to see the film as a telling (and a compendium) of Resnais's projects both realized and not, in which the imagination may be working along more freely than Symbolist lines rather than morally prescriptive ones. The film is actually a kind of history of that particular movement, from its Romantic beginnings (one of the educators is called Rousseau) through its flowering in the artists' represented in Edmund Wilson's collection of essays, *Axel's Castle*, to the Dadaist antics of another of the educators, games expert, whose only contribution to the conference is a lot of babble and humphs.

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Monster as victim

Hermione Lee

EUGENE O'NEILL
Strange Interlude
Duke of York's Theatre

When *Strange Interlude* came out in 1928 in a Theatre Guild production in New York, it won the Pulitzer Prize, played for 426 performances, was censored for obscenity, became a Clark Gable/Norma Shearer movie, made O'Neill \$350,000, and was the theatrical sensation of the decade. It is now forgotten, and this revival by Keith Hack is an act of admirable daring.

Both the scandalous success and the subsequent obscurity are easily understood. The story of Nina Leeds who prevents her marriage to the young "champ" Gordon, killed in the war; Nina's guilt feelings at not having made love to her dead hero, "sublimated" through random sexual adventures; the repressed homosexual writer friend Charlie, tied to his mother, who wants to possess Nina in death, but not before; the businessman husband with a history of insanity in his family, who can't believe Nina loves him unless she bears his child; the "scientific" doctor-lover who agrees to impregnate Nina so she can "give" her husband a healthy child, but who falls miserably in love with her; the unfortunate child of this ménage, who hates his real father because he is his mother's lover; Nina's frantic jealousy of her son's girlfriend - in all this, Herr Freud, as Charlie says, has a lot to account for. O'Neill's "bold" treatment of subjects like promiscuity, adultery and abortion now seems as doggedly conscientious as his passion for Nietzsche and European modernism. The giant shadows of Ibsen, Strindberg, Joyce (O'Neill read *Ulysses* in 1922) nudge and shove behind the play's all-American setting and subject-matter. And the play's most idiosyncratic features, its enormous length (nine acts and five hours, even longer than *The Iceman Cometh*) and its spoken interior monologues, which necessitate the stopping of the action while the characters utter their secret thoughts, are not easy for audiences brought up on naturalistic drama.

Nevertheless, what makes *Strange Interlude* embarrassing - and strange - is also what makes it worth seeing. It's of interest partly as a phase in O'Neill's heroic attempts in all the plays of the 1920s to put the human soul on the stage, to unmask (as he said of *The Great God Brown*) "those profound hidden conflicts of the mind which the probings of psychology continue to disclose to us". In *The Great God Brown* he tried using real masks; in *The Emperor Jones* and *The Hairy Ape* he had monologues and symbolic scenes which expressed the personality; and in *Desire under the Elms* the set had removable walls, which created the effect, as with the spoken thoughts of *Strange Interlude*, that the characters were simultaneously alone and together.

The device of "spoken thoughts" can, like all these techniques, be awkward and laborious. Too often it has to serve as explanation, though the audience isn't officially being addressed ("It's six months since Sam and I were married"); too often it seems melodramatic ("I've got to tell him!"). Too often the secret language is over-rhapsodic ("Questions die in the silence of this peace"); "She has strange devious intuitions that tap the hidden currents of life"). But when Nina and the doctor persuade each other in the third person of the scientific necessity for their liaison, or when she regresses into childhood on "father" Charlie's lap, or speaks across him to her lover while Charlie airs his suspicions, the effect is peculiarly gripping. The characters begin to say out loud what might be thought secret or silent; they become self-conscious about the relationship between speech and thought so that lines like "He can read my thoughts" or "Life is a lie" are disconcerting rather than banal. And, as the device allows them to bitch about each other at close quarters ("He's one of those old maids who seduces himself in his novels") it's also surprisingly funny.

As often in O'Neill, though, the real interest is not in the technical high jinks, but in the solid, thoughtful treatment of social and emotional material. The "interlude" of the title ends by meaning "the present", but in the play's first speech it is New England, a decorous retreat from the changing world of 1919. Charlie and Nina's father, Jamesian aesthete and conservative professor, belong to the old world (where Nina might have been the obedient daughter and innocent maiden they want to keep her as); Nina's husband and lover, one going up (successful self-made businessman) and one going down (promising doctor turned dilettante biologist, wrecked by love like Scott Fitzgerald's Dick Diver) belong to the post-war America whose brassiness and materialism Charlie laments. The play begins with a writer admiring a "classical" New England study; it ends with son Gordon, *Übermensch* of the modern world, taking off in a plane from his father's vulgar Long Island home. (Voytek's sets for this production elegantly express this "progress".)

Nina is not enough of a New Woman to find an independent life in the New America. She wants to be happy (the nearest we get to knowing what's good) but this can only come through her relationship with men. O'Neill understands the exploitation of women very well. The father bribes her to stay at home, the husband uses babies as emotional blackmail, the lover loathes what he desires, the friend wants her to have no other friends, the son is vindictively jealous. She has no mother and no women friends: her ghoulish mother-in-law's advice is "You'll soon learn to love him if you give up enough for him". Her only weapon is to exploit it: her turn; so O'Neill's "woman play" is a horrible display of survival through the use of power. Nine, who seems pitiable enough at first, becomes another of his ferocious material Clytemnestras, wrecking what they love and being punished for it.

Glenda Jackson, on whom the whole thing depends, is a very powerful and alarming Nina. Her savage, neurotic mannerisms (flicking away from the back of a chair as if it had given her an electric shock, letting her jaw tremble like a sinister Katherine Hepburn, smiling like a wolf) are details in a performance which magnificently combines monster and victim. She doesn't make me believe, though, in the necessity for her "spoken thoughts": anything this Nina is thinking would have been said, right out. The more subtle achievement - and perhaps the more difficult - is Edward Petherbridge's malevolent, toady, sad, prudent Charlie, a wonderfully intelligent act to which and well worth the five hours.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 170

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they read this offer not later than May 11. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or falling that the most nearly correct.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 170" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX.

1. I dine with our Monday Evening Club, which is a group of English and Americans. We dine at the Connaught. I have to address them afterwards. I say that a difficult situation may arise between us and Russia and the USA.

2. There was a Tuesday Club at the Crosskeys in Crossinhal where the twin bloods of the countryside congregated and drank deep on a percolage of the expense so that he was left gainer who should have drunk the money.

tions that tap the hidden currents of life"). But when Nina and the doctor persuade each other in the third person of the scientific necessity for their liaison, or when she regresses into childhood on "father" Charlie's lap, or speaks across him to her lover while Charlie airs his suspicions, the effect is peculiarly gripping. The characters begin to say out loud what might be thought secret or silent; they become self-conscious about the relationship between speech and thought so that lines like "He can read my thoughts" or "Life is a lie" are disconcerting rather than banal. And, as the device allows them to bitch about each other at close quarters ("He's one of those old maids who seduces himself in his novels") it's also surprisingly funny.

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Acclaimed banalities

Peter Kemp

Strangers and Brothers
BBC2

Each episode of BBC 2's *Strangers and Brothers* opens with film of a handshake and a handclasp. The only gripping moments in the adaptation as it turns out, they advertise C. P. Snow's dual concern with public and private affairs. Insisting that human beings are essentially alone - "strangers" - he aims to explore the differing ways in which - as "brothers" - they achieve social or emotional rapport.

One of the many factors sabotaging this endeavour is Snow's inability to conceive of human community in any terms other than those of a committee meeting. Parodying the opening of *Anna Karenina*, he writes in one of his novels that "All happy meetings are like one another: every unhappy meeting is unhappy in its own fashion." Substituting the realm of debate for that of domesticity, the alteration is symptomatic. In Snow's world, everything becomes a matter of formal confrontations, voices of confidence, canvassings and causes. Even in bed, his characters are prone to discuss agenda-like items. Their dialogue ("The specialist is anything but sanguine", "Nothing would distress us more than that the Bursar should be hurt") sounds like an attempt to dramatize a set of minutes - though, at moments of special intensity, Snow can attain a note of greater clangour: "Cause the college bell to toll... The Master has been called to meet his Maker."

The portrayal of emotional interaction is notoriously Snow's weakness; documenting power-struggles, supposedly his strength. But even the latter, this dramatization demonstrates, are set up with naive ponderousness: simplistic clashes in the courts or Commons, arithmetic permutations in the Combination Room, lumberingly Machiavellian manoeuvres in government offices or research stations. Adolescent in his relish for and renderings of power, Snow crams his books with callow, awed reference to "getting on", "contacts", and being "made for the top". Examinations are of intense significance. The television sequence opens with Lewis Eliot taking his Bar Finals - the portal to the stairway of success and corridors of power along which Snow will admirably plod after him. A woman unhappy with her doctor husband refuses to leave him ("He happens to be a bad and nervous examinee") until he's weathered his membership exams. This is thoughtful sludge, in Snow's fiction, failure in such competitive concerns can have fearsome consequences. Nightingale in *The Masters* is reduced to a malevolent moaner as a result of annually hearing he's not been elected to the Royal Society. Winslow in the same book brokenly cowers from his colleagues after word comes through that his son has failed his Bar exams. Academic success, on the other hand, is seen as an infallible tonic. Lying balled and mottled in a hospital ward after massive exposure to plutonium, a scientist is breezily rallied with the cry, "Congratulations on your election to the Royal Society!"

Craving success, Snow's males are often thwarted of it by their women. That female handclasp so prominent at the start of each televised episode generally turns out to be a deadly clutch. Eliot's first wife, schizoid Sheila - "a drag on any man alive" - runs squealing from dinner-parties where he might make handy contacts. His brother's wife is another destructive harpy. Charles March's wife feeds family secrets to a scandal magazine. Jago's neurotic spouse - "a formidable handclasp" - costs him the Mastership. The at first amenable mole of a Tory MP - "Thank God for a wife who plays the game according to the rules!" - eventually turns nasty, refusing him an essential divorce. Even Mrs Simpson casts a shadow over an episode, with the Abdication speech broadcasting what a woman can do to a man's career.

Along with this albatross-wife go other recycled motifs - such as the cardboard dilemmas. Routinely, Snow's characters have to choose between stereotyped alternatives - family or party loyalty, fame or philanthropy, morality or realpolitik, water/humanity or cold/infat-

lectualism. Another favoured feature is the acclaimed banality. Poor jokes provoke cries of "Capitall!", "I think that's rather funny." Truisms are applauded as gems of acuity. Most unearned of all are the plaudits showered upon the central figure, Lewis Eliot. Played by Shaughan Seymour as a kind of creeping cadaver whose skull-like features occasionally twitch in some slight rictus of self-satisfaction, he bewilderingly attracts a plethora of tribute to his vitality, spontaneity and warmth. Said to have "a formidable power", "qualities that can take you anywhere", he displays no discernible traits beyond those of the assiduous leech.

This yawning gulf between the Eliot so admirably referred to and the one actually on view suggests that crucial material has got lost. So does the narrative. It's not merely that the adaptor, Julian Bond, has scissored out the sequence's most outlandish episodes - like the trial of the homicidal lesbians in *The Sleep of Reason* - but that the plots presented here seem all gaps and bursts. Eliot lurches to prominence with the speeded-up jerkiness of a silent film; his affair with Margaret sputters with farcical rapidity towards its consummation. Weirdest of all is his supposed error as a novelist. Though we hear he is "making some headway as a writer", and eventually he's receiving double accolades - "I enjoyed your last novel, Sir Lewis" - he's never so much as seen dipping a pen in ink.

But a pseudo-novelist seems a fitting hero for this synthetic fiction - whose hollow cumberdoms here stifles even first-rate talents like those of Cherie Lunghi and Elizabeth Spriggs, trapped behind thick layers of wooden dialogue as if having to perform from within a wardrobe. Especially unfortunate are those required to render Snow's more colourful characters - lovable curmudgeons, senile dons, a biscuit-munching minister who mangles aphorisms: "Can't see the wood for the cooos, eh?" And it's hard to imagine a more thankless task than having to portray either of the emotional defectives to whom Eliot is so close in his earlier years: his rigid, rigid-limbed first wife ("an abnormal woman", it's explained, in case the tetanoid clenchings of Sheila Ruskin's performance haven't made his clear), a character as hard to swallow as the handful of pills with which she finally dispatches herself; and Calvert - "cursed with... clear-eyed despair" - perhaps the most risible depressive in literature, collapsing with *Anger* at the news that he's been awarded a college fellowship ("If I believe in him, now is the time I'd ask God to help me"), poised on a bridge over the Cam trying to relieve his dark night of the soul by singling a Christmas carol, or demonstrating the moral and intellectual power we hear so much of by burbling about the wonders of Nazism with its "sheer Promethean power".

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Incongruities of war

Edward Timms

ARTHUR SCHNITZLER
Tagebuch 1913-1916
Edited by Werner Welzig and others
432pp. Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften
3700103956

The importance of Schnitzler's diaries was noted in these columns when the first volume appeared two years ago (TLS, April 30, 1982). When complete, this expertly edited and handsomely produced series will cover the whole period from 1879 until Schnitzler's death in 1931. The diaries of 1913-16 are particularly interesting, since they cover a period of crisis in European history, as well as in the author's own career. They show Schnitzler's progressive liberalism being overruled by the resurgence of nationalism and antisemitism.

Almost alone among European liberals in 1914, Schnitzler stuck to his principles. He refused to make the slightest concession to militarism and xenophobia. As Austria's most celebrated author he came under great pressure to lend his prestige to the German cause. Publishers, editors and theatre directors badgered him to write patriotic essays and plays. Even his wife Olga gave him a bad time because he held aloof from the popular fervour. And his bank manager was dismayed by the sudden drop in Schnitzler's earnings, when so many other writers were cashing in on the war. The pressures filtered through into his

dreams, where the Emperor Franz Josef appeared, to admonish him for failing in his patriotic duty.

Schnitzler stood firm. From the very beginning he saw the war as a disaster. "World war. World ruin", he noted on hearing that Britain had entered the war (August 5, 1914). With the humane eye of a doctor he recognized that the essential meaning of war is not "fame" but "suffering". And he severely censures authors who celebrate military heroism while avoiding front-line service themselves. Nothing could induce him to join the chorus proclaiming that the war signalled the "spiritual rebirth of mankind".

The diaries convey not only this resolute stance, but the nuances of feeling which inspired it. They express that underlying dimension which eludes historians: what it felt like at the time to be living through a crisis. Day by day Schnitzler records the unpredictable shifts of mood in response to official bulletins and disquieting rumours from the front. And as he had such a wide circle of acquaintance, these private jottings convey the sentiments of a whole segment of Austrian society. Disillusionment with Austria-Hungary is blended with a grudging admiration for the German Reich and even for the Kaiser.

These diaries record the incongruities of war, rather than the atrocities. Or rather, they show how the two are connected. A doctor is careless in dressing a wound, an officer fails to recognize a friend—and two fine men (sons of a family friend) are dead within a week. The military citation says they died "for the Father-

land", the medical certificates give blood-poisoning and drowning as the cause, but Schnitzler attributes these deaths to "Schlammerei" (irresponsible bungling). This failing is seen as characteristic of Austria-Hungary, with its source in a lack of social solidarity.

Even in wartime Austria-Hungary was riven by faction: Czechs against Germans, Catholics against Jews, officer caste against conscripts, artillery (where casualties were light) against infantry (where they were appalling). And the problem of antisemitism was exacerbated by an influx of Jewish refugees. As a diarist Schnitzler is sensitive to these undercurrents of antagonism and records many specific instances. But he never attempts a more systematic critique of the war. His diary still takes the form of disconnected jottings, and his sense of the futility of war is conveyed by ironic understatement and poignant interjection. There are occasional outbursts of helpless rage, but these remained confined to his diary. He lacked the courage and resourcefulness which enabled Karl Kraus to articulate his protest against the war in public.

Thus the diaries show us a writer imured within the private sphere and painfully aware of his failure to impinge on the political developments of his age. Windows are closing on the outside world. This feeling is accentuated by Schnitzler's growing deafness. But it is also accompanied by a paradoxical gain—a transformation of his attitude to time. In the record of his earlier career each day had seemed to be a disconnected fragment. Now the withdrawal into the self is accompanied by an awareness of

the cumulative quality of experience. As deafness increases, memories come more vividly to life. This is clear from the dreams which he records day by day (he shared Freud's sense of their significance). Lovers who have been dead for almost twenty years now come vividly back again. And these dream encounters form a poignant counterpoint to the frustrations of the present.

The sceptical reader may feel that Schnitzler took his dreams too seriously and that he cluttered his diaries unduly. But the more complex dreams endow the fragments of experience with an underlying unity. Family life, literary ambitions and reminiscences of theatre, sexual frustrations, romantic meetings and the fear of death, newspaper headlines and chance encounters, political debates at the horrors of war, racial prejudice, admiration for Germany and a defiant love of Austria—these fragments are sifted into patterns by the kaleidoscope of dreams. So rich are the temporary references that Schnitzler's dream life comes to represent the anxieties of his epoch.

These diaries are thus a document of emotional interest. Schnitzler himself wrote an account of his youth in Vienna, but there is no comprehensive biography of this author who is so representative of his age. The range and richness of his diaries make the written biography a particularly challenging task. Whoever undertakes it will find that he is writing not merely the biography of an individual, but an inner history of Austria-Hungary.

Triumphs of persistence

Idris Parry

MICHAEL HAMBURGER
A Proliferation of Prophets: Essays on German writers from Nietzsche to Brecht
328pp. Manchester: Carcanet. £14.95.
0 85365 467 8

This house is made from demolished buildings. All the essays, now with slight deviations, occasional additions, small deletions, have been published before in books, one of them as far back as 1961. The new arrangement, intended as the first volume of two which will contain all Michael Hamburger's major essays on German literature, is in fact more quickly informative than the earlier collections because an attempt has been made to combine scattered parts into a continuous study.

Hamburger starts his assessment of authors and trends from a study of Nietzsche. He sees in this writer "problems which were the problems of almost every other later writer who matters". It is from Nietzsche that the prophetic proliferate. Fortunately, they don't also proliferate as objectionably as that. We follow in this book the rejection of traditional authority, whether social or religious, which is the thread joining later writers to Nietzsche.

But of course rejection is only a beginning. Scepticism precedes creation but is not creative. In his chapters on individual authors Hamburger outlines the efforts of unbelievers to create in spite of scepticism. He deals in writers who perished. "Who speaks of conquest?" says Rilke. "Endurance is everything." These authors are plunged into puzzling alternatives. There is the art which Thomas Mann calls "art in spite of . . .", the affirmative gesture which Rilke calls "praise in spite of . . ."—meaning a poetic acknowledgment of life's values, but so acknowledgment in spite of the dismal, often frightening evidence of the senses. Hamburger's interesting studies of Kafka and Gottfried Benn show clearly how these writers, like many of their contemporaries, always seem to be working from a shifting footstool. Not because there is something wrong with them, but because life is like this: So Müll, Hamburger tells us, left his great novel unfinished, not because there was no time to finish it but because by its very nature there could be no conclusion. Its subject is the death of tradition.

We see that, as a consequence of absorption with life as it is, these writers shy from abstraction and turn to detail, the smallest event. Hamburger's penetrating study of Robert Walser brings out what he calls the "wondering

simplicity" of this strange strong man who wants to appear weak. His weakness is his submission of self to a world which is still the world Goethe described as being more gifted with genius than the writer. "To be frank about it," says Walser, "I am a Chinese, that is to say, a man to whom all that is small and modest seems lovely and delectable; and who is horrified by all that is big and pretentious."

In this connection, it is curious and revealing that Canetti describes Kafka as the only writer in the Western world who is essentially Chinese. He is supported in this view by Arthur Waley, their judgment being based on the first instance on Kafka's identification with very small animals, even insects. But this itself is indicative of submission, of apparent self-willed weakness before power. Kafka knew Walser's work well. He spoke of it with admiration. Neither Hamburger nor Canetti seems to have traced this Chinese connection back to the Great Exemplar himself, Nietzsche, who notes in *Beyond Good and Evil* that the Chinese have a proverb which mothers teach their children: *shao-sin* — "Make your heart small!"

As a poet himself, Hamburger has always seemed especially close to Hofmannsthal and Trakl. The long Introduction to his own versions of Hofmannsthal published in 1961 reads as well as ever. His essay on Trakl published here is surely the definitive short work on this poet. Its merit derives to a large extent from the insight of a meticulous translator who seems to have made himself small in order to sharpen observation. In this sense, too, Hamburger is close to his chosen authors and himself ideally suited to interpret the poetical idea of this literary period.

Could it, however, be noted that the phrase "the tragic history of literature" did not originate with Walter Muschg? He is of course well known for his book which uses that striking phrase as its title. Muschg took the words from Schopenhauer's bitter challenge: "I wish someone would one day attempt a *tragic history of literature*, showing how the various conditions which owe such pride in their writers and artists treated them, while they were alive."

Goethe Revisited, edited by Elizabeth M. Wilkinson (192pp. John Calder. £5.95. 0 7143 3911 1), contains nine essays originally given as lectures to mark the 150th anniversary of Goethe's death. The contributors are Michael Hamburger, Philip Brady, Hans Keller, T. J. Reed and Victor Lange. The essays, which succeed in balancing them-

The triumph of the press

Robin Briggs

HENRI-JEAN MARTIN, ROGER CHARTIER and JEAN-PIERRE VIVET (Editors)
Histoire de l'édition française: Tome I, Le livre conquérant du moyen âge au milieu du XVIIIe siècle
629pp. Paris: Promodis. 696fr.
2903181063

"Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul whose progeny they are", proclaimed one of the greatest polemicists ever written, with the fitting aim of defending the liberty of the press. John Milton was writing at the end of the heroic age of the book, which had extended from the Dark Ages to the Renaissance, from the monastic scriptoria to the printing shops. During this period the book had first preserved the culture of antiquity and the teachings of early Christianity, then released them with ever greater effect, proving indeed "as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragons' teeth". Printing gave an enormous additional impetus to the rediscovery of old books and the writing of new ones alike, so that intellectual historians from Francis Bacon onwards have seen its introduction as one of the great milestones in European history.

It would be hard to find a dissent from this view, while scholars have long busied themselves in meticulous study of the history of the book, manuscript and printed alike. Yet there have been surprisingly few attempts to present the results of this corporate effort to the lay public, or even to make them easily accessible to historians and students of literature. One of the best of these, *L'Apparition du livre*, by Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, was mainly the work of the latter. Professor Martin has now returned to the charge with the most ambitious attempt yet, a three-volume *Histoire de l'édition française* written by a team of international specialists, for which he and Roger Chartier have acted as general editors, as well as writing some chapters and providing linking sections.

The first volume, *Le livre conquérant*, impresses immediately by the style and scale of its production. Beautifully presented in an attractive binding, the volume is obviously and appropriately intended to be in itself something of a tribute to the art of book production. It is lavishly illustrated, with 60 colour plates and an average of at least one black-and-white illustration per page. Some of these latter pictures are accompanied by short essays, forming intercalations in the main text, to describe a specific process, a particular book, or the career of an individual. It may have been to facilitate their inclusion that the format of three columns to the page was chosen, who two would have made for greater readability. The price is however well worth paying, for the illustrations make an enormous contribution, giving a vivid physical impression of the early book that could only be surpassed by extensive handling of the precious objects themselves. The combination of sheer physical impact with intellectual seriousness gives a weight and conviction appropriate to the subject. This volume may need a strong coffee-table to support it, but it has little else in common with the associated genre of publication; it is *haute vulgarisation* with the emphasis on the first word, and a handsome essay in that communication which is also its own central theme.

The editorial decision to run right over the great divide represented by printing has proved most rewarding. This is partly because the 120 or so pages devoted to the manuscript book are so good, bringing out the continual evolution towards a more efficient production and presentation of texts. The authors necessarily employ European rather than strictly French material, so that this section could very well be translated as a general history of the medieval book. The development of writing styles, of binding, of illustration, of indexes and reference systems, are all described with clarity and economy. The role of the book in the life of monasteries, and later of universities, is explored imaginatively and convincingly. While the authors rightly emphasize the hesitations and imperfections of the manuscript tradition, they succeed in balancing them

against its vitality. By the late Middle Ages the book had already taken a central place in the more general European culture outside the monasteries; the spread of literacy was steadily expanding its influence to make it a prized commodity in lay as well as clerical circles. Many characteristics of lay piety in this period relate closely to written texts, alongside habits of private study which they made possible, with the related appearance of silent reading, a crucial step towards introspective individualism. In this perspective printing (already of course invented in the East) seems an inevitable and necessary development, permitting the smooth acceleration of an exponential curve already taking shape. That it appeared in Germany was a natural result of the strength of German book production in the preceding decades, when war and economic crisis had been depressing activity in France. Without in any way detracting from the importance of Gutenberg and his emulators, this approach is enormously helpful in explaining the speed and extent of their success.

The triumph of the printing press was also aided by the fact that it matched the possibilities of Renaissance technology so well; the tolerances required in the manufacture of both type and presses were within the capabilities of the metal-workers and carpenters of the age, as in virtually no other industry. The technical excellence of many incunables is astonishing, and once suitable type-faces had been developed the best books reached a standard only superseded since in such specialized areas as colour printing. The quality of their paper is likely to mean that they far outlast most later productions. Durability was not the only respect in which early printed books were reminiscent of manuscripts. Into the early decades of the sixteenth century — well past the factitious and rather absurd conventional limit of 1500 for incunables — the conventions of the manuscript remained largely in force, in terms of typography, layout and even content. It is only from about 1530 that a new style can be said to have established itself, one whose basic features have changed surprisingly little ever since.

Despite its slow start, often dependent on immigrants from Germany, Switzerland or Italy, French printing was well launched by this time. The dominance of Paris and Lyon was already clear, but most significant French towns now had their local presses, which concentrated on works with an assured sale: these were above all in the fields of religious and legal practice, educational texts and ephemeral offices and pamphlets. Prestige publishing was almost entirely undertaken in Paris and Lyon, whose Latin and Greek editions commanded an international market, while their entrepreneurs were also building up a major programme of vernacular publishing, from legal and medical texts to the dangerous area of biblical translations and works of religious controversy.

From the early days of Parisian printing in the 1460s the volume's focus inevitably becomes much more specifically French, yet the impact of the new techniques was such that vastly more space is needed to cover a more restricted field. These techniques themselves are discussed in a fascinating chapter on the manufacture of sixteenth-century books, including very clear diagrams illustrating the way different formats were printed, folded and cut. The world of the book is brought to vivid life through discussions of the working conditions of printers, their early trade organizations and the socio-economic gradations among them. As was general at the time, the actual producers rarely matched the wealth or status of those who trafficked to the finished articles; few printer-entrepreneurs could rival the leading bookseller-publishers, who employed lesser masters to print for them. The high cost of paper — normally supplied by the publisher — seems to have been a major factor in limiting the independent activities of most printers, often working on barely adequate capital. Their stock of type was often so small that they could only set up a few forms at once, while when times were hard they might have to sell their equipment to a richer man from whom they then re-leased it. Simple booksellers were equally precarious in many cases, and while their importance is recognized and illustrated,

the paucity of evidence about their activities necessarily limits discussion, so that the whole question of distribution and sale remains rather tantalizingly vague.

Most of the individual careers which are described in brief but often fascinating detail are inevitably those of the printers and publishers, whose operations are so much easier to reconstruct. From the great humanist editor-printer-publisher Robert Estienne down, these men commonly played a dynamic role in the intellectual and religious world of early modern France. They took a crucial part in nurturing the early French Reformation; under François Ier the state showed surprising tolerance of such activities, probably because the rulers of France valued the positive contribution these men were making to state and society. It took exceptional and systematic imprudence on the part of a man like Étienne Dolet to defeat even the protection he enjoyed from the royal almoner, Pierre Du Châtel, bishop of Mâcon, and send him to the stake.

The relative liberty enjoyed by French publishers in the period down to the 1560s resulted in the production of large numbers of Bibles and editions of Marot's versified Psalms, alongside a fringe of evangelical treatises. The real Protestant offensive, however, came from outside France; the notorious Placards of 1534 were printed at Neuchâtel, while from the 1540s Geneva (where Estienne took refuge in 1550) launched an unprecedented wave of controversial works by Calvin and others. Francis Higman convincingly argues that this was the point at which the idea of appealing to public opinion through the press really took hold, soon to extend itself to the political as well as the religious sphere. The use of the vernacular similarly established itself, with Catholic authors feeling the need to reply in kind, trying to claim the attention of the French laity rather than that of the international world of scholars who habitually communicated in Latin. The gradual appearance of a formal mechanism of control and censorship during the middle decades of the century demonstrated increasing official concern, but even had it not been vitiated by conflicts of jurisdiction and difficulties of enforcement, the turmoil of the Wars of Religion encouraged and allowed new excesses in both the religious and political spheres. The violence of both Huguenot and Ligueur propaganda was a major phenomenon of the age, yet paradoxically the period which saw such a demonstration of the dangerous powers of the press was also one of crisis for French publishing; the market for major editions was in sharp decline, while the more ephemeral polemical works and pamphlets rarely brought in much by way of profit. The industry would enter the seventeenth century in a cautious and chastened mood, despite the enormous impact it had made on the sixteenth.

Many of the authors rightly emphasize the close links between *le pouvoir* and the leading Parisian publishers. Already very significant in the Renaissance period, they were enormously strengthened by the rise of royal power after 1600. This was not merely a matter of more effective censorship, or of the canalization of

patronage through the Académie Française and other bodies. From the start the French book had been associated above all with precisely those groups in society which were most closely linked to the monarchy: the clergy and the legal-administrative bourgeoisie whose upper echelons formed the *noblesse de robe*. It was their culture and their values which almost exclusively found expression through the presses, their divisions, frustrations or resentments which surfaced at times of crisis such as the Religious Wars and the Fronde. A strong crown would by definition focus the aspirations and interests of the great majority of these men, thereby tending to impose a general tone on the world of the book.

By the middle of the seventeenth century the concentration of much of the industry in the hands of a few powerful men — always favoured by the government — combined with the expansion of royal propaganda, notably through the *Gazette*, had taken the process to a point where it posed a real if hidden threat to the intellectual and even commercial vitality of French publishing. Only the increasingly arid debates over Jansenism challenged the consensus from within, but the astute operators in the Netherlands were already undercutting French editions with their imitations, and would soon follow up these initial successes with a flood of subversive and disreputable literature, bearing the names of fictitious publishers from blameless cities like Cologne.

With a terminal date for this volume around 1660, such developments are merely hinted at, and relatively little space is given to the most original phenomenon of the seventeenth century, the appearance of the cheap popular literature known as the *bibliothèque bleue de Troyes*, which will no doubt figure more prominently in the next volume. A more significant omission is any proper treatment of technical books, dealing with medicine and surgery, mathematics, navigation, engineering, husbandry and kindred topics. In other ways too the role of the book in opening new horizons and changing the way people thought may sometimes be understated; the religious movements of the seventeenth century, and the growth of French legal scholarship, while certainly not ignored, could have benefited from fuller treatment. Such criticisms are not entirely fair, for they reveal the alarmingly extensible nature of the subject. Within their briefs the numerous scholars concerned have done a splendid job, and it is right that they should have left the reader posing new questions rather than thinking that all is now known. A definitive history of so protean a subject is scarcely conceivable, but as a summation of existing knowledge and ideas the *Histoire de l'édition française* looks as if it is going to be very hard to beat.

Elizabeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as the Agent of Change*, reviewed in the TLS, June 24, 1983, has been issued, abridged "for the general reader", with illustrations, as *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (297pp. Cambridge University Press. £25, paperback, £7.95. 0 521 25858 8).

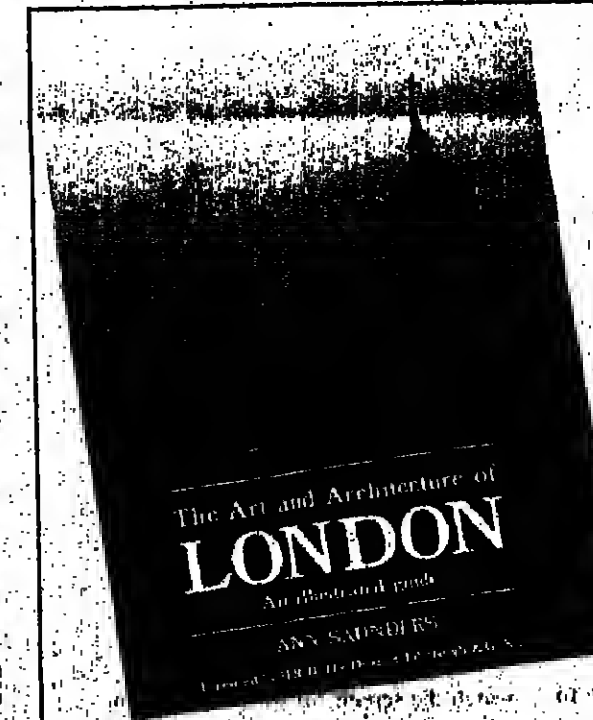
THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF LONDON

An Illustrated Guide
ANN SAUNDERS

This comprehensive guide to the art and architecture of London is a remarkable achievement. Ann Saunders covers the whole of the Greater London area and includes social history and anecdotes as well as information on buildings, parks, places, monuments and museums. The alphabetical classified index makes the work an invaluable reference tool, and her lively style and gifts as a storyteller (she has personally visited every place described in the book) make it the perfect companion for everyone interested in or visiting London.

245 x 175 mm, 480 pp, 240 illus.,
pbk 52 maps
£14.95 (hbk) £7.95 (pbk) May 1984 £22.50

BHAIDON



Buried alive in Zürich

Christopher Wintle

DERICK PUFFETT
The Song Cycles of Othmar Schoeck
482pp. Bern and Stuttgart: Paul Haupt.
3258031541

In its native Switzerland Schoeck's music has long been celebrated as "the purest expression" of the national character, a character manifested in the "fantastic precision" that Derrick Puffett so rightly ascribes to these songs; and it even enjoyed a short-lived vogue in Germany following the composer's most fruitful creative years of 1920 to 1933. But apart from this, and the admiration Berg expressed for the beautiful *Nocturno* for baritone and string quartet, Schoeck's reputation had much to contend with even in his lifetime (he died in 1957). Webern gnashed his teeth over the arrangement he was obliged to make of the opera *Das Schloss Durande* (Goering, for different reasons, did the same); and Joyce, in a rather touching burst of enthusiasm, declared that Schoeck stood "head and shoulders" above Stravinsky as a composer for voice and orchestra – an unhelpful comparison, given the very different aesthetic outlooks involved. Significantly, Dr Puffett's study of the song cycles represents the first sustained attempt in English at the exhumation and rehabilitation of any part of the Schoeck corpus, which also includes five operas, three concertos, and a number of sonatas, quartets and instrumental pieces.

The work Joyce alluded to was in fact Schoeck's most substantial cycle, the "gruesome-satiric, semi-pious" *Lebendig begraben*

("buried alive") for baritone and orchestra. His enthusiasm was not in itself misplaced. This is a powerful and imaginative work by any standards, the title of which provides Puffett with a central metaphor for the composer's life and art. Unlike other Swiss composers, such as Honegger or Frank Martin, he explains, Schoeck never became an *émigré*. Instead he remained in Zürich, away from the principal musical centres of his time, earning his keep as a conductor. This isolation, of course, was only relative, but encouraged a certain provincialism that seems to have been at least partially responsible for the attacks Schoeck directed at the "vain artificers" of modern music (Stravinsky and the serialists especially), attacks which, in their musical manifestations, could easily turn into self-parody of his own most progressive traits. But Zürich also offered him the most sympathetic context for a prolonged exploration in music of the writers he most admired. Many of these were Swiss, and many shared his affinity for Alpine landscape: Hesse, Lenau, Leuthold, Meyer and, above all, Gottfried Keller.

But he also made settings of Mörike, Eichendorff and Goethe. And Schoeck's absorption, Puffett argues, in the words and music of the nineteenth-century Austro-German *Lied* represented the most important aspect of his aesthetic entombment. Indeed, in his assiduous adherence to the kind of precepts enunciated by Wagner's Hans Sachs – veneration of the masters, overt anti-intellectualism, trust in the power of nature – Schoeck seems to have been more German than the Germans. These perceptions underlie the organization of the book, in which an impressive early chapter on those song cycles that exerted most influ-

ence on Schoeck – by Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann and Wolf – acts as a point of reference for all that follows.

Not, of course, that any of what follows would be much of interest had not Schoeck also revealed a discreet, but tenacious, propensity for innovation. For example, the impeccable, Wolf-inspired prosody of the vocal lines, themselves written in a "nervous shifting style, full of fluctuations and ambiguities", tends to eschew overtly dramatic declamation in favour of a more restrained delivery, of a kind that establishes a new intimacy with the listener (one finds something comparable in the later songs of Fauré). There is no corresponding loss of expressive intensity, however, and this is due to Schoeck's handling of several other features which enable him to project a notably large musical breath: the arrangement of short poems into longer narratives, the comprehensive, Strauss-like thematic transformations, and the integration of instrumental forms into vocal contexts (Puffett describes *Wunder-sprache* as a "Lisztian sonata among song-cycles"). Other techniques, such as the "ostin-

ato" treatment, the strikingly advanced harmony, the construction of multi-layered textures, and the rhythmic variety of series of chords, suggest parallels with composers as diverse as Wagner, Berg, and Mahler.

Schoeck was so prolific a song-writer that study of this kind could have proved a daunting prospect for the reader as an account of the Matterhorn. In fact, the book turns out to be an absorbing peregrination through an unsuspectedly fertile musical terrain. Indeed, it is a model of its kind: judicious, learned, sensitive, elegant, broadly allusive and yet much in sympathy with its subject. Despite Puffett's diffidence, moreover, the sparkling accounts seem entirely adequate to their purpose. Whether it will bring about a Schoeck revival is less certain. The refinement of the songs, and the intimate knowledge of German required to understand them, may well prove their limitation for a broader public. Nevertheless, the musical community, at least, should take note: the Schoeck disinterment is proceeding very well.

Charming trifles

Patrick O'Connor

RICHARD TRAUBNER
Operetta: A theatrical history
416pp. Gollancz. £12.95.
0575 03383X

Camille Saint-Saëns gave the best definition of operetta as "the daughter of *opéra comique* who went astray... not that daughters who go astray are always without charm". Its style as we know it grew out of the eighteenth-century French *opéra comique*, was influenced by the great Italian *opéra buffa* composers (Pergolesi, Cimarosa, Salieri and Rossini) and, by taking up the Parisian *comédie en vaudeville* (vaudeville originally meant a new satirical verse set to an already popular tune) to mock the grandiose works being performed at L'Opéra and the imperial court, it attained its maturity in the early works of Hervé and Offenbach.

It is part of operetta's appeal that its formula and conventions should have been drawn equally from the music of the fair and the streets, and from the opera house and court theatres. It is only works which combine these elements successfully that are true operettas: the comic songs have to be as good as the best music-hall number, the finales and choruses as sophisticated as can be. Musical comedies are not little operas, though the form of some is comparable. They were, and are, mostly made to be performed by actors who sing a bit. The English tradition of speaking the songs in operettas was crystallized when Lehár came to London for the first performance of *The Merry Widow* and, after his initial dismay at finding a non-singer in the role, applauded the performance of Joseph Coyne as Danilo.

The opening chapters of Richard Traubner's *Operetta: A theatrical history*, about the development of operetta and its roots in the various song and theatrical traditions of France, Germany and Italy, are enlightening and succinct. Thereafter the book ceases to be chronological but divides into sections about geographical centres – Paris, Vienna, London, New York – and within the theatrical history of each city he sub-divides again, and sketches biographies of each major composer. It is when writing about the lesser-known figures that he is at his best and most enthusiastic (for instance the sections on Hervé and Messager are particularly good in the French section, that on the Hungarian Viktor Jacobi in the Viennese; I do not know of any other reference book in English where one could read such detailed chapters on these careers). On the whole Traubner avoids having to tell the plots of the works concerned and instead recounts some of the performance history attached to them; how they were received critically at the time, and how they have fared in revivals since.

Traubner regrets the passing of the fashion for operetta that had politically satirical libretti in favour of those aimed at "increasingly bourgeois and petit-bourgeois audiences, who prefer sighing over a good love story, prefer-

ably decked out in lavish costumes, to laughing at the vicissitudes of the current government". But it is precisely because of their trifling sentimental plots that works like *The Merry Widow*, *La Cioche de Corneville* and *Merrill England* have survived, and that most of Offenbach's large but unsentimental output is forgotten. The exceptions are those works in which classical or historical allusions are easy enough for a modern audience to identify, without needing to know the intricacies of the contemporary subjects they sought to ridicule. If they are to be performed today it is the music, and only the music, by which they will survive. The only way to deal with the libretti is to prune them and present them for what they are worth. Attempts at updating are doomed to failure.

Operetta in England immediately makes one think of the most depressing theatrical experiences; but the art-form has never fallen into quite such disrepute in Germany, or France. One reason for this imbalance is that the only outstanding English examples of the genre are the Savoy Operas: as these were only allowed to be performed professionally by the D'Oyly Carte company until Gilbert's copyright ran out in 1961, rigor mortis set in quite early. Though there are scores by Monckton, German, Fraser-Simson and even Noxley which still deserve attention, not one of these was ever supplied with a libretto that rose above the mediocre – most of them pandering to the worst sort of nursery humour, jingoism and sentimentality.

After Gilbert, the librettist who wrote the best English operetta lyrics was Noël Coward. But although *Butter Sweet* and *Conversation Piece* are labelled operettas, none of Coward's works falls neatly into this category. Their roots are firmly planted in the musical comedy and revue world of the 1910s that Coward had known as a child; even *Operette*, his tribute to the Belle Époque, written partly as a vehicle for the finest of all Viennese operetta sopranos, Fritzi Massary, does not count. This, by his own admission "the least successful musical play I have done", has its most celebrated moment in a cabaret-style number, "The Stately Homes of England". Coward's writing for the voice was ungrateful, partly, I suspect, because his songs were all really composed with his own singing voice, a falsetto baritone, in mind. What made the English operettas and musical comedies was the liveliness of the singers. In an age when opera was closed to most native performers, the musical stage had the pick of all the talented singers and actors who emerged.

Traubner, when writing of works most of which he cannot have seen on stage and which we are unlikely to, combines contemporary accounts of premieres with his own first-hand knowledge of the piano score. The lists of performance numbers and the names of original casts, and in many cases the details of later revivals, will be of interest only to specialists in the field. Despite the narrative thread that exists between the chapters, the book is essentially a dictionary of operetta composers and librettists which will have its most valuable use

From stone to iron

A. G. Sherratt

HERBERT SCHULTZ
The Prehistory of Germanic Europe
421pp. Yale University Press. £30.
0300026366
CHRISTOPHER SCARR (ed.)
Ancient France: Neolithic societies and their landscapes 6000-2000bc
390pp. Edinburgh University Press. £19.
085324411X

Ancient France and Germanic Europe: these two volumes ought, from their titles, to divide the heartland of Europe between them – to provide, as it were, a prehistory of the EEC. In fact both titles are misleading. "Ancient" France (as its sub-title reveals) is essentially Neolithic France, while "Germanic" Europe turns out to be the German-speaking lands (plus Denmark and Bohemia) from their earliest occupation in Palaeolithic times down to the early historic period in which a linguistic label first has any meaning. In scope, treatment, and in the authority with which they present their subjects these books are therefore very different.

Herbert Schultz is professor of Germanic studies at Brock University, Ontario. His book is essentially a summary of German scholarship for English-speaking readers. It is a worthwhile but inherently very difficult task. Prehistoric archaeology in Germany remains very close to its raw material, frowning alike on synthesis and generalization. Its excavations are meticulous and well-funded, its territory rich in prehistoric remains; yet only rarely have the social implications of all this material been directly confronted. Instead, a bewildering algebras of chronological formulae has been devised, summarizing the succession of artifact styles, tomb types and settlements and correlating the distinctive regional groupings within a larger framework of cultures and periods. In the weird shorthand of the subject, peoples are reduced to their pots or their modes of burial – Beaker culture, Tumulus culture – which give a deceptive simplicity to the complexities of the underlying social changes which are indirectly mirrored in this material.

The problems of narrative exposition are thus formidable, and Professor Schultz makes a brave attempt, in four hundred pages, to carry his readers through some many thousand years. His tenacity in pressing relentlessly on through successive millennia is impressive: six chapters deal successfully with stone-using hunters, pottery-making farmers, bronze-wielding warriors and finally the iron-using chieftains with their transalpine connections. The style is easy, the instances well referenced – there are plenty of fascinating facts about the life of prehistoric man. Yet the treatment remains unsatisfying, even anecdotal. There is no time to convey the technical complexities of the record, nor to look at its implications at any deeper level. The author has little grasp of the nature of archaeological evidence or critical appreciation of it, and produces occasional howlers (eg. figs 41 and 52, or map 16). The expert is annoyed by its easy story-telling, the newcomer given no insight into the great variety of social systems which must have existed in these vast spans of time. Periods and cultures come and go in a kaleidoscope mixture that has little logic or reason, beyond the "commonsense" progression of hunters and farmers, of stone, bronze and iron.

The book's references and style make it clear that it has been written largely from German sources: in many cases German terms are given a literal translation, rather than the form currently in use by English-speaking prehistorians: "bulbous amphora", "lineband ware", "Upper Chalkolithic", "pinetwig pattern", "humballs". This is, in fact, less a prehistory of Germanic Europe than a Germanic prehistory of Europe. Yet no German scholar would write on this scale, across the many periods and specializations which constitute *Vor und Frühgeschichte*. For Germanic prehistory is by its nature incompressible. Its procedure is analysis in its most literal sense – the division and subdivision of periods, cultures and typological categories. There are no criteria for selection and generalization: no way out of the maze of observations. This book faithfully reflects the atomic nature of German scholarship, but such will have its most valuable use

omits its real achievements: the reconstruction of dozens of detailed local sequences and groups. Given its scope and raw material, the outcome is inevitable – an unreliable and often outdated secondary summary, lacking both authority and a natural feel for its subject. At less than a sixth of the price, and twenty years older, Stuart Piggott's *Ancient Europe* provides a surer guide.

The book which Christopher Scarr has conceived and edited is fundamentally different. As a collection of synthetic essays by young professional archaeologists, its appearance is superficially more forbidding. It is certainly harder work to read, but ultimately more satisfying. The book aims to give a systematic coverage of the present picture of French prehistory from the arrival of the first farming communities down to the appearance of metalurgy. It is organized on a regional basis, each contributor having recently completed a doctoral dissertation (most of them at Cambridge), on some aspects of the region in question. Each chapter begins with a brief sketch of the geography of the region and how it has changed since Neolithic times, and a short history of archaeological work in the area. This is followed by an account of the material culture,

settlements and types of tomb used at successive periods, and then a more open-ended discussion of the sorts of ideas which are relevant to explaining these changes. It is thus a fusion of French archaeological discoveries and recent British research interests, especially in the ecology and social organization of early farming communities. For each chapter there are plentiful illustrations of the material, taken from standard French publications, and many original maps, as well as useful lists of radiocarbon dates. The results are then surveyed in a perceptive synthetic essay by the editor.

Although this is to some extent a book by professionals for professionals, it actually gives a far better insight into how prehistorians work than does the Schultz volume. It conveys a sensitivity to the landscape, and how it has been altered by five thousand years of farming; it shows how prehistorians interrogate the archaeological record by mapping, fieldwork and excavation; and it provides an array of stimulating ideas about how the enigmatic traces of early settlement may be interpreted in a way satisfying to the historian and geographer.

Work on the Neolithic period in France has

often been over-shadowed by the wealth of earlier cave-paintings or the splendour of Celtic and early medieval art. Yet it is a crucial area for understanding how farming first came to Europe. Early farmers spread across the Continent by two routes: one along the Danube and Rhine, the other along the Mediterranean. These two streams converged in France and their adaptation and interaction is a fascinating study. Native communities also played an important part, which is being increasingly recognized, in the genesis of the megalithic monuments of the Atlantic coast. In Brittany these go back as far as the fifth millennium bc. Besides these prominent tombs, early farming societies also constructed elaborately defended settlements, such as the ditched enclosures of the Charente which have been recently revealed by aerial photography. All these raise challenging questions about the social organization of the early settlers, which are realistically assessed in these essays, and some possible answers defined.

That such a volume is possible reflects the remarkable recent growth in prehistoric archaeology in British universities, and the enterprising internationalism which has characterized some of the best departments.



Slabs XXV and XXVI of the north frieze of the Parthenon as engraved after a drawing by James Stuart and originally published in 1787 in volume II of *Antiquities of Athens*; it is reproduced here from *The Elgin Marbles* by B. F. Cook (72pp. British Museum Publications. £4.95, 07141 2026 X).

Welcoming the wagon

Keith Branigan

STUART PIGGOTT
The Earliest Wheeled Transport: From the Atlantic Coast to the Caspian Sea
272pp. Thames and Hudson. £20.
0300012792

Wheels have been turning for more than five thousand years, but the origins and development of wheeled transport are still subjects of great interest and debate. Stuart Piggott's new book complements that of Littauer and Crouwel (*Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals in the Ancient Near East*, 1979) by investigating these problems as they apply to Europe. The date of the first appearance of wheeled vehicles in Europe is still open to question: Piggott argues that they first appear (on present evidence) amongst the TRB culture of southern Poland at a time which, on tree-ring calibrated Carbon 14 dates, would be around 3500 ac; but as yet no certain remains or representations of wheeled vehicles of this period are known. The earliest such evidence – two attractive model wagons from Hungary – belong to the centuries around 3000 ac, and they are closely followed by surviving wooden wheels from full-sized vehicles found in Holland, Denmark and Switzerland, and by many clay models of similar wheels found on a dozen different sites in Eastern Europe. Further East, at the same time, Transcaucasian pit graves were dug to take the remains of two-wheeled carts and four-wheeled wagons. As Piggott says, "what we appear to have is the adoption over a few centuries of a technological innovation by a number of communities that were co-existent and contemporary... and with the requisite wood-working technology to make manufacture possible". It should be emphasized that these communities were

spread over a distance of 1,500 miles. The crucial questions which Piggott attempts to answer are where and why wheeled vehicles were first developed, and how their widespread adoption was so rapidly achieved?

Piggott rightly follows others in rejecting the idea of a migrating "Kurgan" people who swept across Europe from the Russian steppe in their carts and wagons. Instead he argues that the rapid spread of such a major technological innovation over so great an area must be accounted for by diffusion of some kind. I agree: the alternative that the wheel and wheeled transport were developed more or less simultaneously in three or four widely separated geographical regions is implausible. Where I must part company with the author is on the question of where the innovation was first made. Piggott is convinced that the wheel was invented in Mesopotamia, yet there is at present no clear evidence that the first Mesopotamian wheeled vehicles are earlier than those in Europe. Two considerations which might favour a European origin are the much greater availability of wood and of a long tradition of wood-working skills in Europe, and (on present evidence) its relatively underdeveloped methods of water transportation. The evidence from Mesopotamia suggests the availability of a variety of boats, which together with the Euphrates and the irrigation canals, provided good transport facilities for agricultural produce. On present evidence it would be rash to insist on the primacy of either area, but the case for "the genius" who invented the wheel being a European is not to be ignored.

By the end of the third millennium ac, the two-wheeled chariot had appeared in Europe, and both it and the four-wheeled wagon had acquired the status of prestige items. To judge from the contexts in which buried vehicles are found, they had become symbols of wealth and

rank, and reflectors of social change. By the end of the second millennium, their symbolism had taken on new aspects, for both chariots and wagons become closely associated with cult practices. Again, it is interesting to note the rapidity with which these changes in the use and significance of the wheeled vehicle are adopted over widespread areas of Europe. The great wagon burials of the Iron Age continue the use of wheeled vehicles as a means of ostentatious display, and perhaps distract attention from both important technological innovations and the importance of the wagon and cart as working vehicles. The appearance of iron tyres, heated and shrunk on to the wood, betrays a high degree of smithing skill and an increased dependence between smith and carpenter. Britain, where evidence for wheeled vehicles is at present lacking before the eighth century ac, produces important evidence of the workshops in which some of these men worked. The extent to which even Britain eventually succumbed to the appeal of the wheel is perhaps best indicated by Caesar, who records that in 54 ac, the British king Cassivellaunus "disbanded the greater part of his force, retaining only about four thousand charioteers".

Despite its attractive production and large format, this is in no sense a coffee-table volume. Behind the general outlines of the story which I have given here, Professor Piggott has assembled a mass of detailed evidence and provided a penetrating discussion of it. The bibliography, with about 800 references, gives some indication perhaps of the depth and breadth of the enquiry and of the book's value to archaeologists and scholars. But both the illustrations and the author's elegant style will allow this book to be read with pleasure and great interest by a much wider readership.

Visions and symbols

Lachlan Mackinnon

WILLIAM B. HUNTER, Jr.
Milton's Comus: Family Piece
 101pp. New York: Whitson. \$15.
 087875 0000
MARYANN CALE MCGUIRE
Milton's Puritan Masque
 208pp. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
 \$20.
 0820306746
DIANE KELSEY MCCOLLEY
Milton's Eve
 232pp. University of Illinois Press. £14.
 0252009800
STEVIE DAVIES
Images of Kingship in Paradise Lost: Milton's
Politics and Christian Liberty
 248pp. Columbia: University of Missouri
 Press. \$21.
 0826203922
HERMAN RAPAPORT
Milton and the Postmodern
 700pp. University of Nebraska Press. £16.10
 0803238622

When the Lady in *Comus* says "O welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope, / Thou hovering angel girl with golden wings, / And thou unblemished form of Chastity, / I see ye visibly", William B. Hunter is clear what happens. "Milton is directing that they appear somewhere at the back of the stage at that moment in a sudden illumination, made visible both to her and to the attentive audience." The lines are cut from the Bridgewater manuscript because, Hunter argues, *Comus* was performed "on an outdoor stage in daylight". He makes a good case for an outdoor performance, but does not make it clear why it should have taken place by daylight: similarly, he offers us a full account of the evidence in the Audley trial, but does not go beyond the conventional in explaining its importance.

Hunter's book is based on teaching experience, and is marked by that origin. The occasional heavy-handed teacherly stab at relevance ("Sir John Spencer of Althorpe, ancestor of today's Lady Diana Spencer") jars the reader's concentration, as do some odd remarks about English life.

Then as now communicants of the Church of England participated in the daily religious services of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer. A section of each has always required the reading of passages from the Old Testament and from the New Testament. . . . It is a rather eerie fact that today one can determine for any given day in Milton's time exactly what biblical passages a communicant would hear during these services.

It is salutary to be reminded how unfamiliar the practices of the Church of England must be to most Americans, but worrying how far a text like *Comus* must have slipped below the intellectual horizon: I wish, too, that I knew a single twice-daily church-goer. Uncertainties like this about faith and class further vitiate a rather cheery presentation of Milton as song-and-dance man.

Maryann Cale McGuire takes a rather different view of the lines quoted. "The Lady claims to see her virtues 'visibly', not symbolically

. . . In conventional masques, a speech like the Lady's would have been accompanied by a breath-taking spectacle. . . . Obviously no such spectacle is to accompany the lines," McGuire sets *Comus* in its historical context and makes a great deal of sense of it. By looking at the masque both before and after Milton she can show just how revolutionary the work is, and because she examines in considerable detail the contemporary controversy about recreation and Protestant views of chastity she can explain Milton's chastening or chastising of the form as a move not merely designed to please the Egertons but as a coherent statement in a larger arena. Where Hunter takes the unlikely view that Milton is putting on a show and annotates the text with stage directions more apt to Johnson, McGuire justifies a more normal reading of *Comus* as a remarkable reshaping of generic expectations.

Milton's Puritan Masque is dry but informative reading. *Milton's Eve* is also dry, but finally, unconvincing. Diane Kelsey McCollay wants to persuade us of Eve's equality with Adam, and makes a telling point about Eve's naming of the flowers as a parallel with Adam's

naming of the animals. Problems arise when she comes to the Fall. McCollay notes that at the end of the dialogue preceding Eve's fatal separation from Adam, "from her husband's hand her hand / Soft she withdrew". Her gloss on this is that "The knowledge that the dialogue has been spoken handfast, or that before its conclusion Adam's hand has again seized hers, spreads an afterglow over its tone". We are made conscious of Eve's "continuing innocence". McCollay oversimplifies the mythological similes which follow this loosening, but her uncertainty about when hands are joined is revealing. The poem does not mention it because this separation of hands refers back to the moment when "thy gentle hand / Seized mine, I yielded, and from that time see / How beauty is excelled by manly grace / And wisdom", a seizure that need not, as McCollay implies, be repeated if, as she says, Eve is unfallen, and it looks forward to the departure "hand in hand" from Paradise. Milton's bringing together of the symbolic and the touchingly human is far more complex than McCollay allows and the point here is precisely that we do not know that hands are held during the dialogue. The separation is cinematically emphasized by this momentary close-up.

The sentimentality of McCollay's work may come in part from an undeclared feminist bias, but proceeds also from a determined upbeatness. She assumes that because Eve cannot love a cloistered virtue she is Milton's surrogate: rather, Milton acknowledges thereby that his own views are those of a creature liable to sin, and that they must be taken together with Adam's glum certainty that "trial will come unsought". Milton's exemplary humility is to make Eve utterly sympathetic yet dispassionately to place her in the moral order of his poem's architecture. *Milton's Eve* is well-in-

formed about theological attitudes to women and extremely useful when considering what Adam and Eve did before the Fall, but it carries that rosy hue into areas where Milton's tragic severity requires much darker shading.

Stevie Davies slices into *Paradise Lost* by examining the ways in which it represents kingship. In Heaven we find "a political model in which the potentially corrupt principle of hereditary rule was absolutely tempered by the principle of meritocracy". Christ deserves to be king because he embodies the Father's completely paternal empathy with his creatures. Milton's religious ideal strips fatherhood of paternalism and is thus the fulfilment of his political wishes. Adam's fall is like Solomon's, out of wisdom into fraud and concupiscence, but the promise of *Paradise Lost* is that of a new, internalized kingship to be shown by the pursuit of Christian wisdom. Every man is to become his own king, bound to rule over and live in understanding with the unruly passions.

Davies arrives at this position by a careful discrimination of the types of kingship in the poem. Her most interesting chapters concern the images of barbarian kings and Roman rulers, the former being given revealing historical background and the latter being shown as richly ambiguous in ways Milton can exploit. Davies's prose is attractively trenchant, though his discoveries do little to modify our sense of the poem.

Four studies of Milton, then, which observe a conventional pattern, setting out to adjust our picture rather than utterly to transform it. They have the courteous virtues of their convention, but are unlikely to provoke violent reactions. Harman Rapaport's *Milton and the Postmodern* is a different case. Hilarity, contempt and awe can each be imagined as a re-

sponse: all would be wrong. This book is a flamboyant piece of deconstructive wit which is arranged rather as a series of essays than as a continuous narrative. Rapaport's latea between Derrida and Lacan, whose sees to be heavily dependent on a close rhetorical tradition to which Milton himself is indebted, as he tries to show that Milton's falls into allegory in the frozen, dead for Walter Benjamin discovered in the *Theses on the Philosophy of Language*. When he quarrels with Christopher Lasch about mixed metaphor in *Samson Agonistes* he invokes Deleuze's notion of a *langue minérale* an oppressed feminine tongue into which Lasch is driven, but it is hard to see how this other than routine close reading dependence on common-sense psychology. His discovery of Milton's proto-fascist and sexually ambiguous politics, on the other hand, is an effect of critical hysteria. If, one might ask, the destruction signifying chains leads to totalitarianism, what then of deconstruction? In some ways, Rapaport is Milton's ideal reader: he is, in the poem terms, so fallen that he sees language as battlefield where the poet implies its most order, and in his fear of the transcendent signified he is unable to address the question of the Father at all. Deconstruction takes seriously Nietzsche's linking of God and grammar: Milton understood the same thing, and his texts are therefore unusually available to a mirror-reading. The fools persisting in the folly may yet become wise: for Rapaport, Milton is at least a living issue, and though his methods are scholastic to the point of absurdity they do force us to think hard. He will deconstruction no friends, but through his book we can reach a more serious engagement with it than simple dismissal, and place it in context which makes it intelligible if not sympathetic.

Easily taken in by the Fox, "a secret papist, who presents himself as a Church of England paragon". Equally, in the book's last chapter Hume vigorously rejects the idea that *The Faerie Queene* is intended to convey secret wisdom to a few select readers. Spenserian allegory is not a blanket under which the poet hides his meaning but a veil which allows him to reveal what would otherwise be impossible to look at or imagine. Instead of deliberate obscurity, what we have is a commitment "to a recurrent process of gradual clarification", a view of allegory which Spenser shared with Sidney and the Protestant theologians.

Here Hume firmly places herself against the occultists, chiefly represented by Frank Kermode. Earlier in the book she looks again at the difficult question of grace in Book I of *The Faerie Queene* and notes in the rest of it, first opened up by A.S.P. Woodhouse. This problem is in turn related to that of the status of Britons and Elves. Contemporary doubts about the truth of the whole of Arthurian myth, she argues, made Spenser distinguish between historical Britons and the Elves of Faerie of fiction and romance. Although she shows that nature and grace were viewed as part of the same process, she recognizes how different Redcrosse Knight's quest is from those undertaken by other knights and devotes a whole chapter to the Legend of Holiness. While her account of the rest of the poem which concentrates on the visionary cantos is full of good ideas, it is, as she admits, rather high-handed, being crammed into one chapter. Dr Hume's keen to revive interest in the poem's historical allegory and suggests that Arthur's wounding of the Seven-headed beast in Canis valley of Book I relates to Queen Elizabeth's ending of the Marian persecutions and that in the same canto his tripping of Duessa's robes reflects "the dispossession of the Roman Catholic church in England by Tudor monarchs".

Edmund Spenser: Protestant poet is a very fine and scholarly book which cuts through much recent, arid, critical debate and interpretation, leaving the reader with a new sense of pleasure in Spenser's artistic and moral powers. Even though some of its arguments and readings may be challenged and several important biographical and historical problems are not taken on, its modest brevity only serves to make the reader wish for more.

Playing the governmental game

H. W. R. Wade

GEOFFREY MARSHALL
Constitutional Conventions: The rules and forms of political accountability
 247pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £16.50.
 0 19 876183 X

Geoffrey Marshall is well known as a constitutional expert and amateur lawyer (no disparagement intended) who explores the political side of the constitution more thoroughly than lawyers do and who nevertheless can handle the legal material. Constitutional conventions are therefore a subject well suited to his talents, since they lie just outside the sphere of technical law, yet they are the essential ligaments which hold together the ancient and ramshackle legal structure of the British constitution. They offer plenty of scope for argument and analysis. No one really knows their exact limits, and they depend for their observance on the willingness of all concerned to play the political game according to the rules. They might be called the rules of constitutional cricket. But the rules of cricket are more efficient in two important respects: they are accurately known; and there is an umpire to enforce them.

It is clear enough that the Queen must assent to Bills passed by Parliament and that a government defeated on a motion of no confidence must resign. But no one has successfully pinpointed the situations in which the Queen might be justified in refusing a dissolution to a prime minister, or in dismissing her ministers, or in exercising a personal choice in selecting a prime minister. Dr Marshall does indeed suggest that even her obligation to give the royal assent to a Bill passed by Parliament may not be taken for granted entirely, and he asks what should happen if ministers advised her to withhold consent to a private member's bill passed against their wishes (to his credit, he refrains from calling it a catch-22 situation). But no one can be expected to say what convention would require in a state of affairs which is itself unconventional. It is only so long as "everyone" is playing by the rules that the system of conventions works. Marshall's question is predicated on a breach of the rules by its assumption that ministers and Parliament are at loggerheads. That is contrary to the convention which requires ministers to resign if they lose the sup-

port of the House of Commons. Once the contrary assumption is made, there is no conventional answer.

Constitutional history is in fact replete with examples of conventions being broken with impunity, and not least in recent times. The rule of cabinet unanimity is perhaps the most honoured in the breach, as where ministers in the Wilson cabinet were allowed to take opposite sides publicly over the EEC referendum in 1975, just as their predecessors in the coalition of 1932 had allowed themselves the "agreement to differ" over tariff policy. Yet the rule of ostensible unanimity is plainly necessary, both because the cabinet cannot enjoy the confidence of the House of Commons if it speaks with divided voices and also because there must not be conflicting advice to the Crown. Most of the primary conventions of cabinet government allow little latitude, and something like an emergency is needed to justify any departure. It was a fully accepted convention that Rhodesia was independent in its internal affairs and that the imperial Parliament would not interfere. But when Ian Smith proclaimed UDI in 1965 there was suddenly a revolutionary situation and the convention was thrown to the winds. Marshall does not discuss this instance, but he does discuss another equally good example, the dismissal of Mr Gough Whitlam by the Australian Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, in 1975. Convention requires that the Governor-General should act as his ministers advise, but if they cannot persuade Parliament to vote supply and national bankruptcy impends, the assumptions which justify the convention have been falsified. Most of the dramatic and politically controversial breaches of convention can be explained on the principle that one wrong turn deserves another.

For the most part the material is admirably chosen and rich in the details of constitutional and political life, particularly over the past ten years or so. Marshall's own comments are cautious and usually very sound. But he devotes one of his chapters to a controversy which I believe he has himself invented and in which he seems to take the wrong side. He argues that the cabinet has, by convention, the right to take part in the decision when to dissolve Parliament and he criticizes the "prime ministerial heresy" which makes it essentially a matter for the prime minister. This raises the whole question of the cabinet's position vis-à-vis the prime minister. In practice, naturally, a prime minis-

ter will consult the cabinet, but Marshall's contention is that he is obliged by convention to do so and (it seems to follow) to accept the majority view.

The reality, however, is that the prime minister holds the political lives of his colleagues in the hollow of his hand: a "night of the long knives" may occur at any time. The advice tendered to the Crown must necessarily be that of the prime minister, who can say to his cabinet, like Abraham Lincoln, "aye one, noes twelve: the ayes leave it". How then can Marshall be right in saying that the prime minister has no peculiar constitutional primacy? He adds that if a prime minister, at odds with his colleagues, wished to dissolve and they did not, the Queen might face conflicting advice from her privy councillors. But privy councillors, as such, have no business to give constitutional advice. That is the province of ministers, and conflicting advice is precluded by the unanimity rule. The notion that the cabinet can give constitutional advice to the Crown, against the wishes of the prime minister, is surely misconceived.

The scenario of the book is a wide one, more extensive than that of Jennings's classic work on cabinet government. The cast includes John Pinfold, Christine Keeler, Lord Lumbton and Jeremy Thorpe, who enliven a chapter of questionable relevance but unquestionable interest. The dry verdict of a Royal Commission on Lord Denning's inquiry is nicely balanced by Mandy Rice-Davies's account of her contribution:

I was asked to go and see Lord Denning. I was about an hour late because of a more pressing engagement with my hairdresser. . . . We had quite a laugh together. . . . I kept wandering off the point and telling him all sorts of things that did not concern him.

If the reader wonders what constitutional conventions are in issue here, he may feel the same about the chapters on the control of the police and of the army. The doctrines and practices in these areas are demanded more by common sense and good administration than by any rules of a constitutional nature. Likewise the ombudsman, who has a chapter to himself, hardly seems to earn his place, since he is regulated by Act of Parliament and not by convention. It is true that he represents a breach in the supposed convention that ministers alone answer for the misdeeds of their departments, and that some critics, including Lord Denning,

opposed the whole institution as inconsistent with the doctrine of ministerial responsibility. But Marshall does not go into that. He is more interested in the cases in which the ombudsman has criticized ministers which, though interesting indeed, do not seem to have much to do with convention. Incidentally, and fortunately, it is not correct that the Act specifically forbids the ombudsman to criticize discretionary departmental decisions.

Eventually the book swings back on to the main highway of primary conventions, particularly those that affect the relations between Commonwealth countries and the Westminster Parliament. There is a good account of Pierre Trudeau's "patrimoine" of the Canadian constitution, by which the last legal links between Ottawa and Westminster were severed in 1982. In the course of the preliminary controversies Marshall gave some excellent advice to the Select Committee of the House of Commons which helped them to expose the unconstitutional nature of the demand from Ottawa that Westminster should pass on the nod whatever legislation Ottawa requested, even though it trespassed upon the powers reserved to the Provinces. Ottawa's claims, it seemed, had been encouraged inopportunely by British ministers, even though the whole subject of leaving the Canadian constitution in the custody of Westminster was to ensure that the Provinces' rights were not put at Ottawa's mercy. In the end Trudeau bought off the provincial opposition with concessions, except in the case of Quebec, which when deserted by the others gave up the fight. But in the meantime the convention requiring provincial consent was upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada, thus justifying the Select Committee's findings. This judgment was a unique event. Whatever else might be uncertain about conventions, it was axiomatic that they differed from law in that they could not be tested in the courts. But Canadian legislation allowed this to be done, and so the problem was resolved judicially.

This remarkable story rounds off Marshall's book, though he seems to doubt whether the severance of the legal link with Westminster is as irreversible as it must now be. The question is not whether the Westminster Parliament is capable of abdicating its authority, but whether the Canadian judges will have abdicated their old allegiance to it.

By reference to the voters

Don Markwell

GARFIELD BARWICK
Sir John Did His Duty
 129pp. Sarendip Publications,
 P.O. Box 333, Wahroonga, NSW 2076,
 Australia. \$A7.50.
 094937900 X

The actions last year of the Governor-General of Groedada, Sir Paul Scoon, have renewed debate on the discretionary "reserve powers" of the Queen and her representatives. In very different circumstances in Australia, such debate was generated by the constitutional crisis of 1975. Australia's then Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, exercised his reserve powers to resolve a deadlock between two elected Houses of Parliament. He dismissed the prime minister, Gough Whitlam (whose government could not get money from the Parliament), and appointed the Opposition leader, Malcolm Fraser, as caretaker prime minister specifically and solely to get supply and to call immediate elections for both Houses.

Kerr (himself a former Chief Justice of New South Wales) acted with the advice of the then Chief Justice of Australia, Sir Garfield Barwick. Barwick, now in retirement, has written a concise but compelling justification of Kerr's action: "what he did was both the only course he could have taken and the course he was in duty bound to take."

By late 1975, because of its record on unemployment and inflation, the departure from office of two senior ministers over a loan-raising venture of doubtful legality, and its general air of incompetence, the Whitlam Labor government had become immensely unpopular. Barwick argues that the Senate did indeed

have the power to deny Supply; that its exercise of that power was reasonable given its judgment (vindicating by the election landslide) that the government had lost the confidence of the people; that a prime minister who cannot get Supply must either resign or call an election; and that, with Whitlam's refusal to do either, the Governor-General acted correctly in dismissing him and, through a caretaker prime minister, referring the political dispute to the Australian people.

It is Barwick's view that the Australian constitution embodies the democratic theory which sees a reference to the voters as the means to resolution of major disputes: there is a procedure (though inadequate to deal with a Supply crisis) for dealing with deadlock between the two Houses over legislation, which is to call elections for both Houses; the Australian constitution, born of referendums can only be amended by referendum. Barwick places great stress on the argument that the Senate's deferral of Supply represented the government's loss of "the approval of the Parliament" which it needs if it is to govern. This is less compelling than the simpler, starker argument he later uses; it is the Governor-General's constitutional duty to "ensure the carrying on of the ordinary services of government", and he must obtain Ministers who can get the money needed for this from Parliament.

The Senate's deferral of Supply, itself a legitimate action, became part of a prolonged crisis because of Whitlam's refusal to call an election. Barwick now places the guilt for the crisis back where it belongs - with Whitlam. He describes Whitlam's intention to govern without Supply, rather than face the people, as "the very antithesis of democracy and a denial of the requirements of the Constitution".

There has been little attempt since 1975 to justify the action of the Senate in deferring the Budget. Barwick's defence of that action has an important cutting edge: it reflects how intertwined the political and constitutional issues remain. But Barwick does not make the fundamental point that if the Senate has the power to block Supply and so to force an election, its judgment that the Whitlam government was a disaster was of itself sufficient justification for its exercising that power to bring about an election which it judged would produce a new government.

Barwick explains how Sir John Kerr, perfectly properly, sought his advice. That advice confirmed Kerr's own judgment of the right constitutional course to take; Barwick convincingly shows that Kerr had no duty to warn Whitlam of his intention. It might be added that, had Kerr done this, Whitlam would almost certainly have sought the Governor-General's dismissal by Buckingham Palace, thus dragging the Queen into an Australian political quagmire. Kerr acted to protect the Queen, and should be applauded for this.

One might reasonably quibble with some of Barwick's points. For example, his dogmatic defence of the Senate as an expression of "our federalism" will annoy many readers. None the less, his justification of Sir John Kerr's action has a ringing clarity and an inescapable logic.

Politics and Government in the Federal Republic of Germany: Basic Documents, edited by Carl Christoph Schwelb, et al (444pp. Leamington Spa: Berg. £21, paperback, £8.95. 0 907582 10 9) comprises a selection of documents relating to the political development of post-war Germany.

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Variations

The ice-compartment blindly copies nature.
 I play a beheaded tape of variations,
 And try to guess the composer and the theme.

On waking, I think I must and shall recall
 A brilliantly clever and horrendous dream.
 But what ensues? Some logical speculations

About piano trios; a fading picture
 Of frightening statues made of pitch; a ball
 Of re-charging a quarter-inch of scotch;

And further trials of essential bosh.

ROY FULLER

The place-man's position

Nicholas Canny

PETER ROEDUCK (Editor)
Macarney of Lisanoure 1737-1806: Essays in
biography
376pp. Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation.
£16.50.
0901905 305

Specialists in Irish History will be familiar with the name of George Macarney from *Macarney in Ireland, 1768-72* (ed Thomas Bartlett, 1978); those who follow the fortunes of the British flag in eighteenth-century India will know of him from *The Private Correspondence of Lord Macarney, Governor of Madras (1781-5)* (ed C. Colin Davies, 1950); those who take an interest in Chinese affairs will have learned much of him in J.L. Cranmer-Blyng, *An Embassy to China* (London, 1962); and readers of the *English Historical Review* will be familiar with the excellent essay by Michael Roberts in the 1974 issue on "Macarney in Russia". But only the truly initiated will be aware that this same Macarney also served as Governor of Grenada, 1775-9; as ambassador to the French court-in-exile at Verona, 1795-6; as Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, 1796-8; as intermittent squire of his east Ulster estate of Lisanoure, and as respected *savant* in London in his last years. We are much indebted to Peter Roeduck for assembling seven essays by specialists on different aspects of Macarney's career, but especially so for interspersing these with four contributions of his own which place the essays in context and provide the essential narrative thread that draws the entire collection into a coherent book. The editorial achievement of Dr Roeduck is all the more remarkable because the reader can barely tell where one author puts down the pen and another takes it up.

The public career of George Macarney was impressive by any standard, but all the more so when one considers that he came from a landed family of only local importance in north County Antrim. The education with which he was provided - private school in Dublin, followed by a degree at Trinity College, Dublin, and a stint at the Middle Temple - was standard for somebody of his social position, and one would have expected this to be followed by a life in Ireland devoted to estate management and the pursuit of the narrow political interests of the Irish Protestant gentry. That his career followed a different course is explained by his considerable talents and striking good looks, by his good fortune in establishing a firm friendship with Stephen Fox, the eldest son of the future Lord Holland; and by the fact that the extravagant life to which he was introduced through this friendship compelled him to seek out a livelihood that would generate an income to make this life possible. This became all the more imperative after 1768, when Macarney entered into a marriage of convenience with Lady Jane Stuart, the deaf, pock-marked, poorly-dowered second daughter of the earl of Bute, who had nothing to recommend her but her father's connection. Thereafter, Macarney had no choice but to pursue the public career he had embarked upon in the hope that it would eventually produce the means and social position to which he now believed himself entitled.

The fact that he could resign after 1798 on a private income of £9,000 a year is a measure of Macarney's success in the public service, and by this stage he had also become an Irish earl and a British baron, and had declined a Cabinet position. Thereafter, until his death in 1806, he divided his time between intellectual activities in London and the development of his family seat in County Antrim, satisfied that both were appropriate to a man of his distinction and attainment. The "rise" of Macarney is the aspect of his career that most concerns Roeduck, and we learn much in his essays both of the operation of the British patronage system and of Macarney's efforts to develop his Irish estates; initially to generate income and later to enhance his social prestige. The specialist authors provide unique insights, usually through Macarney's eyes, of the very diverse societies in which he served, and each offers an appraisal of how he fulfilled the duties assigned to him. Taken individually, the several essays could hardly be improved upon, and any critic

ism of the book relates to two missed opportunities, each relating to Macarney's intellectual development.

It appears from his papers that he took pride in his Irish origins and his Protestantism, but even more striking is the conscious way in which he came to adopt positions different from those assumed by Irish country gentlemen from backgrounds similar to his own. This difference was first manifested when he served as Chief Secretary of Ireland, 1769-72. Then Macarney acted as willing agent of Lord Townshend in seeking to undermine the status quo that prevailed among the Ascendancy group, but he went far beyond the call of duty when he took to hectoring the Irish members of parliament for placing their particular interests before the imperial destiny of Britain. Macarney also broke from his Irish Protestant contemporaries in assuming a "liberal" attitude towards Catholics, which extended to providing them with a chapel on his estate and a house for their parish priest: this during the 1790s when animosities between Protestant and Catholic throughout Ireland, and particularly in Ulster, were reaching fever-pitch. Most of all, Macarney parted company with his Irish co-religionists when in the 1780s he became an advocate of the suspension of the Irish parliament and of Union with Britain. Loyalty to his British mentors may go some way to explaining his changing attitude towards Ireland, but it also seems possible that the provocative positions he adopted were partly explained by his detestation of the Irish political system, which, unlike that in the British Empire, denied opportunity to men of talent like himself.

Even more interesting is the development of Macarney's views of the wider world. He devoted particular attention to briefing himself for each of his overseas assignments, he was a keen observer of social difference and he compiled a detailed analysis of each society in which he served at the point of resigning office. The fact that these societies ranged from China to the West Indies, and from Ireland to Russia, indicates that one has material here for a study in eighteenth-century comparative ethnology, and it is disappointing that its rich possibilities have been generally neglected in the present volume.

To advance such criticisms is, however, to point to shortcomings in the biographical approach to historical investigation, and one must conclude by thanking the editor, the contributors and the Ulster Historical Foundation for providing us with a fascinating collection of essays which amounts to much more than the sum of its parts.

House-dwellers only

Christopher McAll

BRIAN DE BREFFNY (General Editor)
Ireland: A cultural encyclopedia.
256pp. Thames and Hudson. £10.50.
0500013047

DERICK S. THOMSON (Editor)
The Companion to Gaelic Scotland
363pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £25.
0631125027

As far as the Anglo-Irish are concerned, dwellings in the Irish countryside are divisible into houses and cottages, the former being of thirty rooms and upwards and the latter of fifteen rooms or less, there being no middle class in rural Ireland as everybody knows. On the basis of this distinction, the title of Brian de Breffny's *Ireland: A cultural encyclopedia* is a little deceptive. It is really a book about houses and those who were brought up in them, and a very elegant and reasonably priced one, but the cottage-dwellers of Ireland, those who went to the other church, paid the rents, spoke and sang in Irish at least until the mid-nineteenth century, were transported to the colonies, and died in the famine, are given less space than they deserve.

There are five contributions on Irish language, literature and mythology, as well as a tantalizing glimpse of nineteenth-century Dublin street ballads in Thomas McCarthy's article on poetry, but the objection stands. There is, for example, an article on how much nothing

Republican sisterhood

Charles Davidson

MARGARTE WARD
Unmanageable Revolutionaries: Women and
Irish Nationalism
289pp. Dingle, Co Kerry: Brandon/London:
Pluto Press. £5.95.
086322 043 6

Margarte Ward is an Irish socialist feminist and therefore brings to her history of revolutionary Irish women the necessary perspectives. As a feminist, she is not only interested in rescuing women from obscurity - any historian worth his or her salt should do that - but also in applying a feminist critique to her period (c1880-1945). This is very cleverly done: she never makes ahistorical judgments and she eschews the jargon of commitment that is so often a barrier rather than a path to understanding. A couple of phrases ring oddly: "sisters of another generation" (which prompts the irreverent pencil note "aunts?"), and, of Anna Parnell, that she was "deprived" of the right to vote. One cannot be deprived of something one never had, but this is presumably how it looks to a feminist, and that is more interesting than semantic quibbling. The nearest to Newspeak Ms Ward gets is in her use of "anguish", "telegram" and "parent" as verbs, and, without wincing, "prioritize".

Ward's history, too, is almost faultless. She once refers to George VI as George V; she is wrong about the resignation of Lord Cowper as Lord Lieutenant; Albinia Broderick, sister of Lord Middleton, appears as Albinia Broderick, sister of Lord Middleton; and she is wrong to call Mrs O'Shea "Kitty", a diminutive invented by Tim Healy and intended to be insulting. Beyond that, there are a few oddities: Panna Fall translated as Warriors of Fall; the bibliography buried in the end-notes; and an eccentric way with women's names, for all are referred to by first name and surname or first name alone save Countess Markievicz, who is always the Countess or just Markievicz.

Thus the manner: what of the matter? Women in the nationalist movement, or women forming nationalist movements, were, says Ward, at no stage accepted as equal to men. This inequality was variously expressed, either in the abuse we today characterize as sexist, or as patronizing praise for women "who stood uncomplainingly behind the men"; or some such diminution of their role. This attitude penetrated the written records, for from the contemporary accounts and the autobiographies women's activities have been more

or hurried; ten columns on silverwork and a paragraph on the Gaelic League; innumerable plates of fine houses in various stages of dereliction, but no single illustration of what might be described as an ordinary Irish house - that is, nothing in the broad range from the beautiful late-fronted merchants' houses in Kinsale to the whitewashed, thatched farmhouses in Donegal, all of which are presumably significant of Irish culture.

I have less argument with Derick Thomson's *Companion to Gaelic Scotland*. The editor has attempted to do justice to the oral, popular quality of Gaelic culture which still defiantly remains alive in the Western Isles, as it does in the western extremities of Ireland. There are thus articles on walking songs and story-telling, on tales memorized of a sitting and retold in the close atmosphere of a Highland *ceilidh* to while away wet and miserable winter evenings, and on the poets who still produce ribald and scathing commentaries on their fellow villagers.

The *Companion* captures something of the spirit of popular Gaelic culture, but is none the less characterized by a certain stiffness. It is a fairly academic book with extensive articles on Gaelic linguistics, a litany of brief biographical entries that would do credit to a Highland burial ground, and a long and detailed bibliography. I would be surprised if it were to find its place alongside the *People's Friend* and the *West Highland Free Press* on window-sills in South Uist, particularly as it retails at about the equivalent of a year's rent, but no maise - and no Colons - will be complete without one.

or less expurgated or misrepresented. We points out the continuous conflict between nationalism and feminism (equality after independence, but independence impossible until equality), and leaves the way clear for future work on the way the male orientation of independent Ireland envisaged often still envisages) women in a subordinate position: feminism, like sex, being a nasty, foreign import.

The first women's political organization, the Ladies' Land League, called into being to supplement the all-male Land League, the men were being imprisoned. It was assumed a life of its own, thanks to the leadership of Anno Parnell. This sister of Charles Stewart Parnell had a strong political motive, being more radically critical of social than her brother, and her dislike of men increased by her perception of their incompetence and vacillation. It is quite clear that the Ladies' Land League was suppressed because the men could not control it, rather than because it was out of control. With the press, Cardinal McCabe in full cry and the authorities imprisoning the women under anti-protection laws, the response of the men nationalist was to show the number of fronts on which women had to fight.

It was twenty years before women organized a political society: the *Ingineachas Eireann* (Daughters of Ireland). This was a reflection of a men's organization, though political stance was roughly that of the *Irish Republican Brotherhood*. It spoke the language of feminism, even if this barely came through in the two biographies we have: Maud Gonne, its leading spirit. *Irish Women's Eireann* (Woman of Ireland), it founded the first political feminist newspaper. It had to be the implications of feminist politics more in the Ladies' Land League had, for this was a time of the suffrage struggle, which had more problems than solutions. That could and, even more strikingly, the labour struggle are marginal to Ward's theme, though a word to this book on women and Irish labour would be welcome. In this context, the absence of Delia Larkin from her pages is explicable; a very few politically active women are named, the most obvious omission being Mrs Llewellyn Davies.

The central organization of the *Ingineachas* never strong, and they gradually dispersed. They were replaced by the *Cumann na mBan* (Organization of Women), the counterpart of the *Volunteers* (subsequently the *Irish Republican Army*). Ward explores relentlessly the differences between the *Cumann*'s view of themselves and those the men had of them, and is adept at picking upon nationalist appeals to Ireland's "manhood". The *Cumann* was content with collecting money or making badges, and their role in sustaining the fight against the British was a crucial one again. Ward conjures women to the front of the stage. The men were happier with the women on their knees, and many women were content to be there. (In one poignant anecdote, Ward tells how Eilín ní Ráin washed the feet of Edward Daly during the 1916 Rising). De Valera refused to have anything to do with the *Cumann* and Ward adds to the picture of him as a mean-minded, puritanical conservative. The national struggle did, however, advance the status of women, for they rose high in the councils of Sinn Féin and served as judges in the revolutionary courts; Countess Markievicz was not only the first woman to be elected to Westminster but also the first woman to become a Minister. This turned out, alas, to be a freak tide: it was half a century before women again reached high office in Ireland. After the Civil War, the *Cumann na mBan* followed the IRA into the wilderness.

Unmanageable Revolutionaries is far more than just a roll-call of women, and Margarte Ward makes a real contribution to understanding revolutionary Ireland, and even more importantly, to our understanding of feminism as an aid to arriving at historical truth.

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The Word as a whole

Dennis Nineham

JAMES BARR
Holy Scripture: Canon, authority, criticism
182pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £13
(paperback, £5.95).
019 826323 6

Over the last twenty years or so James Barr has carried on an investigation into the way the Bible must be handled if it is to yield religious truth for our time. His *Semantics of Biblical Language* (1961, reviewed in the TLS, April 26 that year) may be said to have marked something of a turning-point in biblical studies, and since then he has continued to earn the gratitude of the theological community for the critical acumen with which, in a succession of books, he has analysed the various suggestions which have been forthcoming on this subject.

Holy Scripture, based on the James Sprunt Lectures delivered at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, two years ago, carries on the good work, and the result of the way the argument is developed is that in the earlier part of the book Professor Barr continues his dialogue with conservative students of the Bible. The open texture of his phraseology ("one may ask why . . .", "the reason may be . . .", "one must wonder whether . . .") makes clear his awareness that there are no "knock-down" arguments in a discussion of this sort; but to most readers two things at least will appear to have been demonstrated. First, that the conservative approach does not have the support of the biblical writers themselves. Most of the latter had no canon, no complete Bible in our sense; and even when some of them did declare an attitude to "sacred letters", Barr has no difficulty in showing that it was not that advocated by modern biblicalists. Second, he shows that the practice of modern conservatives does not coincide with their theory, which is, incidentally, a lot tighter than that of classical Protestantism. The theory insists upon the equal inspiration and authority of the entire canon, but what we get in practice is an operation of picking and choosing, in which things are emphasized; others de-emphasized, some taken literally, others left as marginal.

His argument next takes Barr on to an examination of a comparatively new approach to the Bible known as canonical criticism and associated closely with the name of the American scholar Brevard S. Childs (see especially his *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, 1979). According to Childs, the only proper subject-matter for *Christian* biblical exegesis is the biblical canon in its final form. Just as form-critics have suggested that an individual unit, or pericope, will yield its meaning if its shape as a whole, and the relative proportions of its parts, are attended to, so, according to canonical criticism, the Scriptures will yield their message only if the canon is treated as a whole and its parts studied strictly in their relation to one another. Earlier critical approaches, including that of the biblical theology so popular after the Second World War, are written off, not as illegitimate, but as religiously irrelevant, concerned, as they are, with the circumstances, audiences and the meanings of the individual authors, and the meanings attached to their writings before they were incorporated in the canon.

This approach has attracted a good deal of interest, and its affinities with the influential strands in modern literary criticism which insist on the primacy of the finished text and denounce the "intentionalist fallacy", will be obvious enough; and so will its affinities with some types of structuralist analysis. It will also be clear why it has at least an initial attraction for some conservative scholars, who like the way it abstracts from concern with the purposes and circumstances of individual human authors, and concentrates on the Word of God as a whole. It is impossible in the space available to do justice to the sympathetic, but minute and characteristically clear-headed, way that Barr deals with this approach: suffice it to say that if it survives such devastating criticism at all, it will surely be in a heavily revised form. It is shown to rest on a congeries of rather loosely related ideas and reactions, not by any means all mutually compatible; most damagingly all, it is accused of putting relevance above truth.

A long and very illuminating appendix is cast in autobiographical form, and so we get not only a picture of the development of biblical scholarship over the last half-century as seen by one of its most distinguished practitioners, but some scattered indications of Barr's own understanding of the matter. He is by no means unsympathetic to canonical criticism and to the possibility that it may have a real contribution to make, but he argues that it can never be more than one strand in a treatment of the Bible made up of a number of complementary approaches. Even then - and this is another of his objections to canonical criticism - he does not believe that the last word ever will, or should, lie with biblical theology. Useful though it is,

it cannot . . . be "theological" in the full sense of the word. Its service is rather ancillary and preparatory . . . the ultimate decisions of theology cannot be taken by biblical theology alone, but can be taken only when all the relevant factors have been considered; and these factors include systematic questions, moral considerations and philosophical perspectives which lie beyond the scope of any biblical theology.

With all this most theologians will find themselves in general agreement; the book will indeed frequently reveal them to themselves, such is the penetration of much of Barr's analysis. One question, however, the book does raise. The very persistence of the author's preoccupation with this topic suggests that the authority of the Scriptures is a matter of vital practical concern for him, and this is borne out by a number of things said in this and his earlier books. As suggested above, he believes that contemporary faith, if it is to qualify as genuinely Christian, must be controlled by the Bible in a strictly normative (his word) fashion. He has to some extent discussed this matter in earlier books but it would be good if he could be persuaded to defend his contention at length and to show how such a "dogma of normativeness" can be made to work. In the mean time some of his positive statements in this book will remain obscure to many of his readers. For example:

Our Lord's remarks in interpretation of Old Testament passages have authority for us because he spoke them, but it is often difficult for us to say that he can count as right interpretations of the text . . . it is difficult or impossible for us to universalize them and draw from them a principle or method which we could affirm as our own.

Some may suspect that the puzzle they feel over that might apply to other aspects of Barr's own position if it were spelt out. However, no one lightly accuses Professor Barr of not having thought things through, and if we ask for more, it always shows how much we valued what we have already been given.

Reform and reaction

Richard Inledon

M. N. L. COUVE DE MURVILLE and PHILIP JENKINS
Catholic Cambridge
149pp. Incorporated Catholic Truth Society.
£4.95.
085183 494 9

Is it wise for two people (except the admirable ladies who form Emma Lathin) to write one book? In *Catholic Cambridge* the style is, at least, uneven - better, on the whole, as it goes on. Chapter Six reads particularly well, with a pleasant, dry humour. Earlier, there is some banal guidebookese, with a touch of the weary-well-I-magine, though here too there are nice things: an admirably poker-faced account, for instance, of the dispute about the Carmelites' claim to have been founded by Elijah.

The book is small for its scope, and there are loose ends. What became of the two medieval churches of All Saints, and which, if either, relates to the modern one? More importantly, when did laymen appear? We had been reading about a clerical university, and suddenly in the early sixteenth century we hear of "Lord Mountjoy, another Queens' man". Again a sixteenth-century question: what happened to the Castle? In fact, it is answered, but in a chapter which covers the eighteenth century and isn't - as the authors admit - about Cambridge at all. Sawston Hall, we read there,

Placating the powers

J. L. Houlden

PAUL W. WALASKAY
"And So We Came to Rome": The political
perspective of St Luke
121pp. Cambridge University Press. £15.
0521 25116 8
S. G. WILSON
Luke and the Law
142pp. Cambridge University Press. £15.
0521 25349 9

Of all the early Christian literature, the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, almost universally accepted at face value as the work of the same author, fall most plainly within the spheres of both ancient historians and biblical scholars. It is not without irony that while the former often draw attention to the historical verisimilitude of aspects of Luke's work, the latter are inclined to be sceptical and to emphasize rather the theological and other tendencies which are discernible within it. Luke's flowing and apparently simple narrative, while exhibiting a man of the world's knowledge of the Roman environment, bristles with difficulties when it comes down to detail - almost any detail. In many cases, the difficulties arise because he has made his narrative the servant of his beliefs, in the case of Acts, perhaps had to organize fragments of tradition as best he could, that is, in accordance with his picture of the ordering of events under the hand of God.

So much is clear. What is very far from clear, despite much research, is precisely what Luke's tendencies were. It seems that no single theme suffices to explain his purpose. He had a number of objectives, of different kinds and not necessarily wholly consistent. Despite his apparent secularity and appeal to a wide and cultured audience, the likelihood is that Luke's work was written primarily for intra-mural Christian edification and instruction. Further, despite his essays at stylish Greek and demonstrations of Mediterranean know-how, Luke was, if not Jewish, then a Gentile deeply impregnated with the Church's Jewish inheritance, culturally and theologically. He knew and cared about Christianity's Jewish roots.

There has always been an awkwardness for those ready to acknowledge that Luke wrote chiefly for a Christian audience: he seems (and many have given it up as his main purpose) to be putting Christianity forward to potential Roman persecutors as harmless and unworthy of their judicial attention. The difficulties this idea raises concerning the circulation of Luke's work are formidable (did great men read such work?), and its plausibility, even on the basis of Luke's words, has not gone unquestioned.

Paul W. Walaskay has now turned that argument bridle on its head, in "And So We Came to Rome", holding that, far from providing a defence of the Church to a surely unheeding Empire, Luke was really writing a defence of the Empire to a timid and untrusting Church. The accounts of favourable treatment of Christians in Acts, the picture of humane behaviour on the part of Roman officers and above all the determined attempts by Roman governors and others to grant acquittals in the cases of Jesus and Paul all serve to encourage Christians to think positively about the political power in the time left before the world ends.

But if that may be one aspect of Luke's purpose, evidently another of his major concerns relates to the proper attitude of Christians to the Jewish Law. The Church of Luke's day, increasingly Gentile in composition, had to establish its identity in relation not only (or primarily) to the imperial power, but also to the Judaism on whose Scriptures it relied for substantiating its claims and from which it had sprung. Here too Luke's attitude is astonishingly positive. True, Jews are often portrayed as the Church's enemies, and their role in, for example, the condemnation of Jesus, Stephen and Paul becomes central. But, even when Luke condemns, he also excuses: the very leaders of Judaism, in having Jesus done away with, acted in ignorance. Moreover, while Jews might be hostile, Judaism itself is not to be rejected. The teaching of Jesus with regard to the Law is as much friendly as critical (especially on its basic moral concerns), and Paul is shown as both himself observant of the Law and as accepting a degree of observance to be obligatory even for Gentile converts to Christianity.

S. G. Wilson's *Luke and the Law*, the second of these two volumes in the Society for New Testament Studies monograph series (49 and 50), presents a discerning and balanced account of the many-sidedness of Luke's material and frankly demonstrates its baffling character. The author does not quite manage to draw all elements into a single coherent picture, and perhaps it cannot be done. One solution, not considered, has much to command it: that Luke's eye was not chiefly on the Jewish question in its own right but on Gentile Christians of his own time who were inclined to abandon too easily the Jewish legacy which, in Luke's view, gave the essential providential background to Christ and the Church. To that end, it was necessary to show much of Judaism in a favourable light and the early Christian leaders as making no sharp break with the past, but being happy to build upon it as Jesus himself had done.

It is good enough to make one want more. It would have been interesting to hear what kinds of exegesis the medieval scripture lecturers favoured, and nice to be reminded that the scholastic disputation has not been unheard in modern Cambridge. And, since we have a chapter on Sawston anyway, where is the ghost and where the priest-holes? And, having gone as far as to admit that Lopes bungled the chaplaincy figure, why not go all the way and tell us how Cardinal Bourne's visitation coincided with that of the balliffs and how Lopes was bailed out from the private pocket of his predecessor, by then parish priest? ("God will reward you, Canon," said the Cardinal.) To hear such tales again one would gladly spare the tedious overlapping of the picture captions and the main text.

A final caveat. Wilfred Knox is credited with the view that it is "utterly wicked" to change one's Church. Incredible, in the light of his words when his brother Ronald did just that. His letter then was an early example of the happier feelings, now prevalent, which allow a book like this to be written without a hint of triumphalism.

But this is to cavil at a rewarding book. I did learn something about the town; and more about the structure of the University than in a decade of residence. Above all the book brings out the continuity - physical (Franciscans built the conduit which carries the water to the

Symmetrical simplicities

Jorge Calado

MARTIN GOLDMAN
The Demon in the Aether: The life of James Clerk Maxwell
224pp. Edinburgh: Paul Harris. £18.
086228 0265

Some children covet the moon. James Clerk Maxwell had the talent to aim higher and at the age of two could triumphantly claim that he had got the sun trapped in his nursery. While playing with a tin plate he saw the sun's reflection whirling round the room and promptly sent for his parents to communicate his discovery. He was also at that tender age very ingenious with anything mechanical. "Has great work with doors, locks, keys, etc.... As to the bells, they will not rust: he stands serene in the kitchen and Mag runs thro' the house ringing them all by turns or he rings and sends Bessy to see and shout to let him know, and he drags papa all over to show him the holes where the wires go through" - so wrote his doting mother. Thirty years later he would use the "bells in the belfry" metaphor while commenting on the Lagrangian method in one of his classical papers on electromagnetism. His childhood toys, which he religiously kept at Glenlair, the family home, all his life, were stepping stones for future discoveries - the "diabolo", a home-made gyroscope, led to the sophisticated dynamical top with which he investigated the motion of a spinning body; the "wheel of life" or zoetrope (a forerunner of the cinematograph) was later used to demonstrate the way two circular vortex rings play at leapfrog with one another, thus opening new possibilities for the vortex ring storm model. The model was later abandoned but Maxwell's work became one of the cornerstones of modern topology. Certain images and ideas recur throughout Maxwell's life. As Martin Goldman points out in this compelling biography, there is a "wholeness in the circularity and immutability" of Clerk Maxwell's interests. His achievements are the synergic product of a brilliant scientific originality tempered by a deep reverence for continuity and tradition.

Between his first optical observations at the age of two and the last book review written shortly before his death in 1879 lie over one hundred papers, four books and revolutionary investigations on gas theory and electromagnetism, as well as outstanding contributions to many other fields. As the late Professor Coulson wrote in his classic essay on Clerk Maxwell, (*Clerk Maxwell and Modern Physics*, 1963) "there is scarcely a single topic that he touched upon which he did not change almost beyond recognition". Among them one could cite thermodynamics, the structure of Saturn's rings (which would trigger off his work on the kinetic theory of gases), photo and viscoelasticity, colour vision, the theory of servomechanisms (Maxwell's paper "On Governors" has been mentioned by Norbert Wiener, the father of cybernetics; as the foundation stone of the subject), reciprocal diagrams, relaxation processes. At the time of his death atoms and molecules were still, for many a brilliant scientist, figments of the imagination or mathematical artifices. The nature of the electric charge was still a mystery (the electron was only discovered by J.J. Thomson in 1897) and yet Maxwell could already write about "molecules of electricity" in his discussion of Faraday's experiments on electrolysis.

Clerk Maxwell's imagination was predominantly visual; he preferred always to have before him a physical representation or model of the problem in which he was engaged and then to translate it into geometrical and hence mathematical form. As he himself wrote, "scientific truth should be presented in different forms, and should be regarded as equally scientific, whether it appears in the robust form and vivid colouring of a physical illustration, or in the faintly and paleness of a symbolic expression". Throughout his career he produced purely geometric papers, starting with his first, at the age of fourteen, "On the Description of Oval Curves", and those having a Plurality of Poles, a contribution to the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He also expected the simplicity of an international law to be an argument for its stickiness, for God would surely have

ated the world in a way that scientists would perceive as rational and symmetric. There is nothing fearful about symmetry in science. Indeed, symmetry of the equations (invariance) is often the yardstick with which to assess the beauty of a physical theory.

As a master of mathematical techniques Maxwell was always alert to similarities in the equations dealing with different phenomena. His theory of electromagnetism which, at a stroke of genius, unified optics with electricity and magnetism, arose, in part, from allegorical extrapolations of heat convection. He also saw Faraday's lines of force as streamlines of fluid flow (hydrodynamics) and proved that the laws of light are the same as those of mechanical vibrations (acoustics). Electromagnetic waves were only detected after Maxwell's death by an American inventor, David Hughes, but it was left to Hertz to grasp the significance of the discovery.

Clerk Maxwell's career was steadily built but tragically brief: Fellow of Trinity, Cambridge, when he was twenty-four (1855), Professor of Natural Philosophy first in Aberdeen (1856) and then at King's College, London (1860) he resigned from the chair in 1865 to produce his celebrated *Theory of Heat* (1870) and *Treatise on Electricity and Magnetism* (1873) and to rebuild and extend Glenlair. He returned to academic life, after much debate, in 1871 as the first Cavendish Professor of Experimental Physics at Cambridge, and stayed there until his death of abdominal cancer in 1879, at forty-eight. The creation of the Cavendish chair and its concomitant laboratory marked the dawn of a new era in British science education. Gone were the days when it was possible for the best physics laboratory in the country to be that of an amateur scientist, John Peter Gassiot, who had amassed a fortune in the port wine trade. New technologies were being discovered and implemented. It no longer made sense for Maxwell to conduct his experimental research with blankets and feather cushions as heat insulators, as he had done in the spectacular confirmation of the variation of the viscosity of a gas with the square root of temperature; or to hang a well-dried woolen blanket in the laboratory to achieve a dry atmosphere. Clerk Maxwell was not a great experimentalist, but he knew the value of experiment in furthering scientific progress: "I never try to dissuade a man from trying an experiment; if he does not find what he wants, he may find out something else." In this he had to surmount some formidable opposition, from, among others, Isaac Todhunter, who, in an elegantly perverse way, taught that "the who first plucks an experimental flower thus appropriates and destroys its fragrance and its beauty".

One of the attractions of *The Demon in the Aether* lies in the attempt to place the life and work of Clerk Maxwell against the social background of nineteenth-century Britain and the panorama of coeval physics. The amazing panoply of distinguished physicists produced by Scotland and the North of England in an age when the major scientific issues of the day were intelligible to the general public, is irrevocably linked to the Industrial Revolution. But in presenting us with an overall view of nineteenth-century science, Dr Goldman might have tried harder to avoid being repetitive and discursive; more care should also have been given to some of the illustrations and their description in the text, which do not always match each other.

Like its recent predecessor, Ivan Tolstoy's *James Clerk Maxwell: A biography* (1981), (*TLS*, July 30, 1981), *The Demon in the Aether* is a compromise between the detailed but scientifically dubious *The Life of James Clerk Maxwell* by Lewis Campbell and William Garnett (1882) and the overly technical essay by C.W.F. Everitt, *James Clerk Maxwell - Physicist and natural philosopher* (1975). To quote again Professor Coulson, "the best scientists are often the most attractive writers... I should choose Maxwell as one of the best. In any anthology of English prose writing of the Victorian Age, I should most assuredly include some contribution of his". The definitive biography of James Clerk Maxwell will have to be a work of literary merit. Paraphrasing Boltzmann, Maxwell's great counterpart in Germany, we are still waiting for the voice which, with the greatest dramatic vigour, will

Return of the dons

Rupert Hall

MORDECHAI FEINGOLD
The Mathematicians' Apprenticeship: Science, universities and society in England, 1560-1640
248pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50.
0521 251338

"Tournent, tournent mes personnages" sang Anton Walbrook in the film version of Schnitzler's *La Ronde*, and, like the music, historians go round and around. Fifty years ago no one doubted that science came from the universities: Copernicus and Cracow, Galileo and Pisa, Harvey and Padua, Kepler and Tübingen - not to mention the well-known associations with Oxford and Cambridge - such conjunctions and a hundred more were thoroughly familiar. Then the social and economic determinants came along in the 1930s to tell us that the universities were fool of Aristotelian fustiness and that modern science was created by thriving, thrusting Puritan artificers. Gresham College in London, wrote Francis Johnson, not Oxford or Cambridge, was the birthplace of the Royal Society. The mechanical philosophy, wrote Christopher Hill with less justice, was the philosophy of the rude mechanicals. The new freedom of thought was seen as the fruit of Protestant capitalism; the new mathematical science was the product of the merchants' desire to steer their fleets safely round the globe; science was the intellectual secretion of the bourgeoisie.

This total insistence on the social substance of innovation to the neglect of its intellectual form - the persistence of the same problems, even the same "models" and language - also failed to take into account the formation of scholars and the networks of common interests that bind them together. All the Gresham Professors were educated at the ancient universities; some, like Briggs and Wren, returned to them from London. There was no such chasm between the *avant-garde* Londoners and the dusty old dons bumbling on about Aristotle as the social historians would have us believe. Voices on the other (and of late, less popular) side - Mark Curris, Hugh Kearney, Lottie Mullinger, T. K. Rabb - have long insisted that this Weberian picture is a caricature. Mordechai Feingold now inverts it so as to claim that "it was left to the Savillan [Oxford] - rather than the Gresham [London] professors to provide the systematic, up-to-date professional scientific education needed to stimulate science in England".

Since he is able to demonstrate convincingly - against rather careless contentions by the other party - that mathematics was taught and

studied widely in the English universities of Elizabethan-Stuart age, Feingold's vindication of them as nurseries of scientists is obviously firmer ground than it would be if advanced against those who argue for the mainly hermetic origins of modern science. A perusal of his evidence takes the form of an elaborate prosopographical compilation of mathematical lecturers, tutors, professors and writers, a compilation made possible by a wide trowl with a fine net. Feingold has transformed our picture of the English mathematical population - though few rank with Briggs and Harriot. His minute examinations, like that of Curtis many years ago, does not to recreate the vivid intellectual life of English academics and their pupils, so often frozen in inactivity by the illusion of time's telescope. And it corrects anachronistic ideas of the role of the artisan and the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, Feingold places himself in a like jeopardy by insisting on a dichotomy between the academic world of the seventeenth century between "education" and "research", who was regarded as pointless and needless as well within living memory. Though the date Feingold's period was less notoriously tidy than his successor of the eighteenth century, the idea that loxity in teaching could be balanced by vigour in research, or vice versa, was not entertained. Feingold devotes a not altogether successful chapter to the important subject of academic patronage in order to indicate its effect in taking promising scholars from the university into private service: the most vicious fact about a society in which patronage is a major force is that it creates a system of obligation conflicting with the normal system of obligations between office-holders and their employers or putative clients. Satisfaction of the patron becomes the goal, not satisfaction of pupils, nor the advancement of knowledge.

Feingold is right to argue that patronage as much as the nature of institutions affected men's careers, but the existence of patronage, if nothing else, destroys the dichotomy between "teaching" and "research". When it maintains that Gresham College had some success with the latter, though it failed with the former, he is making a point that the seventeenth century would not have understood. Further, since his examples of active researchers at Gresham College (especially Kenelm Digby) were not, at the relevant times, Gresham Professors, but mere lodgers in the place, the historical validity of the point seems questionable. Otherwise, Feingold prudently follows the demonstration by Adamson of the gross inflation of the claim made on behalf of Gresham, at least in the period.

AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

John Adlard's long poem, *Sobleski in Autumn*, was published last year.
Keith Branigan is the author of *Roman Britain: Life in an Imperial province*, 1983.
Robin Briggs is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.
Jorge Calado is Professor of Physical Chemistry at Cornell University.
Nicholas Canny is currently completing *From Reformation to Restoration: Ireland 1534-1680*.
Lord Carver is the author of *War Since 1945*, 1980.
John Clive's *Thomas Babington Macaulay: The shaping of the historian* was published in 1972.
A. O. J. Cockburn's books include *Truth to Life*, 1974.
Bernard Dixon is a former editor of *New Scientist*.
David Donnison is co-editor of *London: Urban patterns, problems and policies*, 1973.
April Fitzroy's *Lorenzo da Ponte* has recently been reissued as a paperback.
Roy Fuller's third volume of autobiography, *Home and Dry*, was published earlier this year.
P. N. Furber's books include *Italo Svevo: The man and the writer*, 1966.
John Guy's *The Public Career of Sir Thomas More* was published in 1980.
Rupert Hall is Emeritus Professor of the History of Science and Technology at the University of London.
J. L. Heald is a lecturer in New Testament Studies at King's College, London.
Adrian Lyttelton is editor of *Italian Fascism: From Pareto to Gentile*, 1973.
Don Markwell is an Australian Rhodes Scholar at Trinity College, Oxford.
Dennis Nineham is Professor of Theology at the University of Bristol.
Geoffrey Parker is Professor of Early Modern History at the University of St Andrews.
Idris Parry's collection of essays, *Hand to Mouth*, was published in 1981.
B. W. Robinson is a former Keeper at the Victoria and Albert Museum.
A. G. Sherratt is an Assistant Keeper at the Ashmolean Museum.
Frances Spalding's biography, *Vanessa Bell*, was published last year.
George Steiner's *Antigones* will be published next month.
Michael Stewart's most recent book is *Controlling the Economic Future*, 1983.
A. K. Tharby edited *The Penguin Companion to Literature: Europe*, 1971.
Edward Timms is a Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.
Brian Vickers is the editor of *Rhetoric Revisited*, 1982.
B. W. R. Wade is the author of *Constitutional Fundamentals*, 1980.
Christopher Webb is a lecturer in Media at Goldsmiths College, London.

Paperbacks

Drama

SAMUEL BECKETT. *Collected Shorter Plays*. 316pp. Faber. £3.50. 0 571 13040 2. □ This collection provides a forceful reminder, in case one were needed, of the uncompromising singularity of Beckett's "dramaticules" for stage, radio, film and television - the subtle transformation of technical means into imaginative ends, the texts' power "to claw" (as Beckett put it himself) individually and, taken together, to suggest the teasing symmetries and recapitulations of a remarkably consistent oeuvre: the "couples and pseudo-couples" that abound here, for example, telling stories and failing to speak to each other, or the way in which the plays have steadily illuminated areas of feeling and tapped linguistic resources that are closely entangled with the author's Irish birthright, and that have recently begun once more to bring a sombre beauty to a body of fiction that has for the most part managed to get itself written in French. In one volume at last are the not always easily available miniature masterpieces *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Embers*, *Play*, *Come and Go*, *Footfalls*, *Not I* and *That Time*, as well as the leaner *Acts Without Words I and II*, the plays for Billie Whitelaw, *Footfalls* and *Rockaby*, the astonishingly economical *Cascando* and *Words and Music*, the more recent, sketchier *Ohio Impromptu* and *A Piece of Monologue*. Nothing is marginal. Twenty-seven years separate *All That Fall*, the first play printed here, from *What Where*, the last; though the former may seem, by comparison, of a positively Balzacian richness, the intervening texts are in fact magnificently undiminished in inventiveness, tact and (apart perhaps from the uncertain "Roughs" for theatre and radio) delicacy of touch.

A. J.

History

CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON (Editor). *A Radical Reader: The struggle for change in England, 1381-1914*. Penguin. £7.95. 0 1402 2444 0. □ The struggle - "for basic freedoms... both in fact and in law" - continues, insists Christopher Hampton in his introduction to this large assortment of radical documents, which, however, he chooses to end at the year of the outbreak of the First World War. He calls his new anthology a "gathering together [of] contemporary witnesses" to the struggle against oppression, and to that end it is a substantial monument, although readers are more likely to find it useful for reference than satisfying to read from beginning to end. It contains poems by Wyatt, Milton, Blake and others (including Burns, suitably, in this English anthology, threatening to leave "auld Scotland"), pamphlets, goblets snatched from novels to illustrate a misery or two, and many bits and pieces by authors ranging from Wat Tyler to Charlie Chaplin. The book is prefaced by a chronology of the constituent ages but lacks a serviceable list of contents; and Mr Hampton, whose dedication to "the struggle" is not in doubt, must have agonized over the suitability of a few of the items, including the anonymous poem which contains the lines, "A woman is a worthy thing, / They do the wash and do the wring."

J. C.

CHRISTINA LARNER. *Enemies of God: The Witch-hunt in Scotland*. 244pp. Basil Blackwell. £4.95. 0 631 13493 X. □ First published in 1981 and reviewed in the *TLS* of November 13 of that year. The reviewer wrote: "This is a scholarly, subtle and discriminating book... what it teaches us about Calvinism, in one of the few nations in which it captured the established church, is at least as interesting as what it teaches us about witchcraft."

ROSS MCKILLEN. *The Evolution of the Labour Party 1910-1924*. 261pp. Oxford University Press. £6.95. 0 19821899 0. □ First published in 1974 and reviewed in the *TLS* of March 14, 1975. The reviewer wrote that the book "significantly advances understanding of some of the major strands of British twentieth-century politics. The scholarship is meticulous: only those who have also grappled with the immense archival resources of the Transport House Library can fully appreciate Ross McKilbin's skill and subtlety in producing a coherent account from the massive con-

pendence files of the Labour Party's secretariat between 1910 and 1924. Further, the story is presented with insight, lucidity and sometimes with humour. This is, therefore, a wholly admirable addition to the Oxford Historical Monographs series and to recent literature on the British left, one which deserves wide acclaim."

Horticulture

ROY STRONG. *The Renaissance Garden*. 240pp. Thames and Hudson. £7.95. 0 500 27214 X. □ The formal garden is too often dismissed as dull and barren, but *The Renaissance Garden in England*, first published in 1970, should convince even those readers who will never acquire the taste that it exemplifies a fascinating combination of intellectual and princely preoccupations. Sir Roy Strong concentrates on the long period of peace from 1509 to 1642 which saw the building of so many fine houses - among them, Hampton Court, Nonsuch, Kenilworth and Wollaton. The design of palace and garden was conceived as a single architectural project, governed by Humanist ideals. These Tudor and Stuart gardens unfolded in a series of geometrically related spaces and vistas: terraces, steps, grooves, mounts, knots, trellised arbours and summer houses would be linked by walks and waterworks - in the form of fountains, waterfalls, ponds - and, studded by topley and statuary, the whole design was imbued with symbolic meaning, heraldic, emblematic and allegorical. This complex art form, destroyed by Capability Brown *et al*, was revived in an impoverished form in the last century.

A. P.

Humour

NOEL COWARD. *A Withered Nosegay: Three Cod Pieces*. 267pp. Methuen. £2.95. 0 413 54960 7. □ This anthology of three *jeux d'esprit* by Noel Coward has little more than curiosity value. The first item, *A Withered Nosegay* (reviewed in the *TLS* of June 8, 1922) was a youthful piece of nonsense, a collection of pen portraits of fictional women in history, accompanied by drawings by Lorn MacNaughton, based on alleged old masters: it is hard to say whether the drawn or the written evocation of characters such as Bianca di Pianto-Forti and Donna Isabella Angelica Y Bananas are the more numbingly inept. They are entirely overshadowed by later efforts in the genre of cod history by artists such as Osbert Lancaster, whose parody is based to a firm and affectionate knowledge of period and style. In *Chester Buns* (*TLS* of June 11, 1925) Coward turned his parodic non-talents on Edith Sitwell, whose manner was anyway so idiosyncratic as to defy pointed or meaningful parody. The poems of "Hermia Whittlebot", perhaps recognizing this problem, are disarmingly unobservant of their subject and target; though Coward himself was quite carried away by his persecution of the Sitwells, his attacks, seen in retrospect, betray his silly conservatism, their derision for an avant-garde enemy unbrightened by the wit that might result from thought and insight. The parody anthology of modern poets reaches its nadir in *Spangled Unicorn* (*TLS* of December 29, 1932), which affords witless mockery of unrecognizable originals. The book is illustrated by a job lot of portraits from a photographer's studio, which Coward redeployed to represent his E. A. I. Maunders, Crispin Pither *et al*, thereby causing both anger and distress to their real subjects.

A. J. G. H.

EDITH WHARTON. *In Morocco*. 222pp. Century. £4.95. 0 7126 0347 6. □ First published by Jonathan Cape in 1920 (and reviewed in the *TLS* of October 7 1920 year) *In Morocco* is a fine example of book-compilations. Edith Wharton had two reasons for producing this book. She wanted to celebrate her overwhelming admiration for General Lyautey who successfully brought Morocco under the protection of France in 1912; and she was teased by the fact that there was no guide-book for the brave traveller. In September 1917 she and Walter Berry set off from France to tour Morocco, for three weeks enjoying all the benefits the French Government could bestow, which is to say almost every luxury denied the ordinary traveller. In such circumstances, and with so brief an association with the country, Edith Wharton was hardly over-endowed with first-hand knowledge when she set down to write. She depended a lot on the language of visual sensation: "As we drew nearer, the walls towered close over us, and skirting them we came to a bare space outside a great horseshoe gate, and found ourselves in the foreground of a picture by Carpaccio or Gentile Bellini." Then she affixed solid evidence of literary work to expand these impressions. Then, she tackled on chapters about history, architecture, and of course General Lyautey's contribution to Morocco.

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and chronic fatigue. Instead of facing up to a marked marital conflict... There can be no doubt that Professor Szasz is a redoubtable fighter in the cause of civil liberty, particularly when it is threatened from the standpoint of the psychiatrist. He makes bold and sweeping forays into enemy country and is constantly on the alert. Such a watchdog is to be prized even though he leaves in his wake a fair amount of wreckage."

Travel

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON. *The Amateur Emigrant*. 138pp. Hogarth Press. £2.99. 0 7012 19122. □ The Hingarth Press, newly revived as a paperback reprint outfit, includes in its varied first list Stevenson's two-part narrative of the journey he made in 1879 from England to San Francisco. He travelled with poor emigrants from half the northern world - Russians, Chinese, Irish, Cornish (the only group he doesn't find sympathetic with: "miners who kept grimly by themselves, one reading the New Testament all day long through steel spectacles, the rest discussing privately the secrets of their old-world, mysterious race... I can make nothing of them at all... Not even a Red Indian seems more foreign in my eyes"). But if he was a fellow-traveller of emigrants, having no intention himself of settling in the States, he travelled in his own right as a writer, literally an amateur: he was going in California to marry Fanny Oshorne. In a fervent short introduction, Jonathan Raban mimes much of Stevenson's becoming united with the other voyagers, suggesting, for example, that he travelled stercor. But Stevenson is at pains to say on the very first page that he didn't: he chose to spend much of his time in the poorest quarter, but "I was not, in truth, a stercor passenger. Although anxious to see the worst of emigrant life, I had some work to finish on the voyage, and was advised to go by second cabin, where at least I should have a table at command. The advice was excellent...". The point, surely, is that Stevenson's alert sympathy with his companion-subjects, here as in his other travel-writings and essays, came partly from his separateness. The travel-writer was a traveller, but he was also, and first, a writer. Getting him off-balance here, and also in its surprisingly laborious account of the narrative's "symbolic structure", the introduction is misjudged, too, in praising *The Amateur Emigrant* at the expense of absolutely everything else Stevenson wrote. Raban is right that it is a marvellous book, "the best account ever written of the great European adventure in the nineteenth century, the passage to America, the New World". But the Hogarth Press would do well to ignore what he says about Stevenson's other books ("like images from a travel agent's brochure... over-coloured... whimsy... mannerism") and give us more - all? - of the rest.

J. T.

EDITH WHARTON. *In Morocco*. 222pp. Century. £4.95. 0 7126 0347 6. □ First published by Jonathan Cape in 1920 (and reviewed in the *TLS* of October 7 1920 year) *In Morocco* is a fine example of book-compilations. Edith Wharton had two reasons for producing this book. She wanted to celebrate her overwhelming admiration for General Lyautey who successfully brought Morocco under the protection of France in 1912; and she was teased by the fact that there was no guide-book for the brave traveller. In September 1917 she and Walter Berry set off from France to tour Morocco, for three weeks enjoying all the benefits the French Government could bestow, which is to say almost every luxury denied the ordinary traveller. In such circumstances, and with so brief an association with the country, Edith Wharton was hardly over-endowed with first-hand knowledge when she set down to write. She depended a lot on the language of visual sensation: "As we drew nearer, the walls towered close over us, and skirting them we came to a bare space outside a great horseshoe gate, and found ourselves in the foreground of a picture by Carpaccio or Gentile Bellini." Then she affixed solid evidence of literary work to expand these impressions. Then, she tackled on chapters about history, architecture, and of course General Lyautey's contribution to Morocco.

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Timothy D'Arch Smith's *R. A. Coran and the Fortune Press* (92pp. Berlin Rota. £12.50. 0 854000 23 2) contains the memoir of Canon's life and character originally printed in the *TLS* (September 12, 1980) and adds to it a hand list of the 607 titles of books ascribable to the Fortune Imprint under his direction. The list is intended as a guide to those who "wander into this intriguing bibliographical tangle".

Symmetrical simplicities

Jorge Calado

MARTIN GOLDMAN
The Demon in the Aether: The life of James Clerk Maxwell
224pp. Edinburgh: Paul Harris. £18.
085238 0265

Some children covet the moon. James Clerk Maxwell had the talent to aim higher and at the age of two could triumphantly claim that he had got the sun trapped in his nursery. While playing with a tin plate he saw the sun's reflection whirling round the room and promptly sent for his parents to communicate his discovery. He was also at that tender age very ingenious with anything mechanical. "Has great work with doors, locks, keys, etc.... As to the bolts, they will not rust; he stands sentry in the kitchen and Mag runs thro' the house ringing them all by turns or he rings and sends Bossy to see and shout to let him know, and he drags papa all over to show him the holes where the wires go through" - so wrote his dotting mother. Thirty years later he would use the "bells in the belfry" metaphor while commenting on the Lagrangian method in one of his classical papers on electromagnetism. His childhood toys, which he religiously kept at Glenlair, the family home, all his life, were stepping stones for future discoveries - the "diabolo", a home-made gyroscope, led to the sophisticated dynamical top with which he investigated the motion of a spinning body; the "wheel of life" or zoetrope (a forerunner of the cinematograph) was later used to demonstrate the way two circular vortex rings play at leapfrog with one another, thus opening new possibilities for the vortex ring atom model. The model was later abandoned but Maxwell's work became one of the cornerstones of modern topology. Certain images and ideas recur throughout Maxwell's life. As Martin Goldman points out in this compelling biography, there is a "wholeness in the circularity and immutability" of Clerk Maxwell's interests. His achievements are the synergic product of a brilliant scientific originality tempered by a deep reverence for continuity and tradition.

Between his first optical observations at the age of two and the last book review written shortly before his death in 1879 lie over one hundred papers, four books and revolutionary investigations on gas theory and electromagnetism, as well as outstanding contributions to many other fields. As the late Professor Coulson wrote in his classic essay on Clerk Maxwell, (*Clerk Maxwell and Modern Physics*, 1963) "there is scarcely a single topic that he touched upon which he did not change almost beyond recognition". Among them one could cite thermodynamics, the structure of Saturn's rings (which would trigger off his work on the kinetic theory of gases), photo and viscoelasticity, colour vision, the theory of servomechanisms (Maxwell's paper "On Governors" has been mentioned by Norbert Wiener, the father of cybernetics, as the foundation stone of the subject), reciprocal diagrams, relaxation processes. At the time of his death atoms and molecules were still, for many a brilliant scientist, figments of the imagination or mathematical artifices. The nature of the electric charge was still a mystery (the electron was only discovered by J.J. Thomson in 1897) and yet Maxwell could already write about "molecules of electricity" in his discussion of Faraday's experiments on electrolysis.

Clerk Maxwell's imagination was predominantly visual; he preferred always to have before him a physical representation or model of the problem in which he was engaged and then to translate it into geometrical and hence mathematical form. As he himself wrote, "scientific truth should be presented in different forms, and should be regarded as equally scientific, whether it appears in the robust form and vivid colouring of a physical illustration, or in the tenuity and paleness of a symbolic expression". Throughout his career he produced purely geometric papers, starting with his first, at the age of fourteen, "On the Description of Oval Curves, and those Having a Plumity of Foci", a communication to the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He also expected the simplicity of an experimental law to be an argument for its exactness, for God would surely have cre-

ated the world in a way that scientists would perceive as rational and symmetric. There is nothing fearful about symmetry in science. Indeed, symmetry of the equations (invariance) is often the yardstick with which to assess the beauty of a physical theory.

As a master of mathematical techniques Maxwell was always alert to similarities in the equations dealing with different phenomena. His theory of electromagnetism which, at a stroke of genius, unified optics with electricity and magnetism, arose, in part, from allegorical extrapolations of heat convection. He also saw Faraday's lines of force as streamlines of fluid flow (hydrodynamics) and proved that the laws of light are the same as those of mechanical vibrations (acoustics). Electromagnetic waves were only detected after Maxwell's death by an American inventor, David Hughes, but it was left to Hertz to grasp the significance of the discovery.

Clerk Maxwell's career was steadily built but tragically brief. Fellow of Trinity, Cambridge, when he was twenty-four (1855), Professor of Natural Philosophy first in Aberdeen (1856) and then at King's College, London (1860) he resigned from the chair in 1865 to produce his celebrated *Theory of Heat* (1870) and *Treatise on Electricity and Magnetism* (1873) and to rebuild and extend Glenlair. He returned to academic life, after much debate, in 1871 as the first Cavendish Professor of Experimental Physics at Cambridge, and stayed there until his death of abdominal cancer in 1879, at forty-eight. The creation of the Cavendish chair and its concomitant laboratory marked the dawn of a new era in British science education. Gone were the days when it was possible for the best physics laboratory in the country to be that of an amateur scientist, John Peter Gassiot, who had amassed a fortune in the port wine trade. New technologies were being discovered and implemented. It no longer made sense for Maxwell to conduct his experimental research with blankets and feather cushions as heat insulators, as he had done in the spectacular confirmation of the variation of the viscosity of a gas with the square root of temperature; or to hang a well-dried woolen blanket in the laboratory to achieve a dry atmosphere. Clerk Maxwell was not a great experimentalist, but he knew the value of experiment in furthering scientific progress: "I never try to dissuade a man from trying an experiment; if he does not find what he wants, he may find out something else." In this he had to surmount some formidable opposition, from, among others, Isaac Todhunter, who, in an elegantly perverse way, taught that "he who first plucks an experimental flower, thus appropriates and destroys its fragrance and its beauty".

One of the attractions of *The Demon in the Aether* lies in the attempt to place the life and work of Clerk Maxwell against the social background of nineteenth-century Britain and the panorama of coeval physics. The amazing paucity of distinguished physicists produced by Scotland and the North of England in an age when the major scientific issues of the day were intelligible to the general public, is irrevocably linked to the Industrial Revolution. But in presenting us with an overall view of nineteenth-century science, Dr Goldman might have tried harder to avoid being repetitive and discursive; more care should also have been given to some of the illustrations and their description in the text, which do not always match each other.

Like its recent predecessor, Ivan Tolstoy's *James Clerk Maxwell: A biography* (1981), (*TLS*, July 30, 1981), *The Demon in the Aether* is a compromise between the detailed but scientifically dubious *The Life of James Clerk Maxwell* by Lewis Campbell and William Garnett (1882) and the overly technical essay by C.W.F. Everitt, *James Clerk Maxwell - Physicist and natural philosopher* (1975). To quote again Professor Coulson, "the best scientists are often the most attractive writers... I should choose Maxwell as one of the best. In any anthology of English prose writing of the Victorian Age, I should most assuredly include some contribution of his." The definitive biography of James Clerk Maxwell will have to be a work of literary merit. Paraphrasing Boltzmann, Maxwell's great counterpart in Germany, we are still waiting for the voice which, with the greatest dramatic vigour, will give us the full measure of Maxwell's genius.

Return of the dons

Rupert Hall

MORDECHAI FEINGOLD
The Mathematicians' Apprenticeship: Science, universities and society in England, 1560-1640
248pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50.
0521253338

"Tourment, tourment mes personnages" sang Anton Weisbrook in the film version of Schnitzler's *Lo Rondo*, and, like the music, historians go round and around. Fifty years ago no one doubted that science came from the universities: Copernicus and Cracow, Galileo and Pisa, Harvey and Padua, Kepler and Tübingen - not to mention the well-known associations with Oxford and Cambridge - such conjunctions and a hundred more were thoroughly familiar. Then the social and economic determinants came along in the 1930s to tell us that the universities were foci of Aristotelian fustiness and that modern science was created by thriving, thriving Puritan artificers. Gresham College in London, wrote Francis Johnson, not Oxford or Cambridge, was the birthplace of the Royal Society. The mechanical philosophy, wrote Christopher Hill with less justice, was the philosophy of the rude mechanicals. The new freedom of thought was seen as the fruit of Protestant capitalism; the new mathematical science was the product of the merchants' desire to steer their fleets safely round the globe; science was the intellectual secretion of the bourgeoisie.

This total insistence on the social substance of innovation to the neglect of its intellectual form - the persistence of the same problems, even the same "models" and language - also failed to take into account the formation of scholars and the networks of common interests that bind them together. All the Gresham Professors were educated at the ancient universities; some, like Briggs and Wren, returned to them from London. There was no such chasm between the *oyant-garde* Londoners and the dusty old dons bumbling on about Aristotle's social historians would have us believe. Voices on the other (and of late, less popular) side - Mark Curtis, Hugh Kearney, Lottie Mullinger, T. K. Rabb - have long insisted that this Weberian picture is a caricature. Mordechai Feingold now inverts it so as to claim that "it was left to the Savilian [Oxford] - rather than the Gresham [London] professors to provide the systematic, up-to-date professional scientific education needed to stimulate science in England".

Since he is able to demonstrate convincingly - against rather careless contentions by the other party - that mathematics was taught and

studied widely in the English universities, Elizabethan-Stuart age, Feingold's *Mathematicians' Apprenticeship* is a firmer ground than it would be if it were against those who argue for the hermetic origins of modern science. A deal of his evidence takes the form of a rate prosopographical compilation of mathematical lecturers, tutors, professors and others, a compilation made possible by a wide trawl with a fine net. Feingold has transformed our picture of the English mathematical population - though few rank with Briggs and Harriotts. His minute examination, like that of Curtis many years ago, does not recreate the vivid intellectual life of the academics and their pupils, so often from inactivity by the illusion of time's passage. And it corrects anachronistic ideas of the artisan and the bourgeois.

On the other hand, Feingold does not, in a like jeopardy by insisting on a dichotomy between "education" and "research", well regarded as pointless and needless well within living memory. Though the Feingold's period was less notoriously like his successor of the eighteenth century, the idea that laxity in teaching could be better by vigour in research, or vice versa, was entertained. Feingold devotes a not altogether successful chapter to the important subject of academic patronage in order to indicate its effect in taking promising scholars from university into private service; the most vicious fact about a society in which patronage is a major force is that it creates a system of obligations conflicting with the normal system of obligations between office-holders and the employers or putative clients. Satisfaction of the patron becomes the goal, not satisfaction of pupils, nor the advancement of knowledge.

Feingold is right to argue that patronage as much as the nature of institutions affected men's careers, but the existence of patronage, if nothing else, destroys the dichotomy between "teaching" and "research". When he maintains that Gresham College had some success with the latter, though it failed with the former, he is making a point that the seventeenth century would not have understood. Further, since his examples of active researchers at Gresham College (especially Kenelm Digby) were not, at the relevant times, Gresham Professors, but mere lodgers in the place, the historical validity of the point seems questionable. Otherwise, Feingold prudently follows the demonstration by Adamson of the gross inflation of the claim made on behalf of Gresham, at least in the period.

AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

John Adlard's long poem, *Sobriety in Autumn*, was published last year.
Keith Brantigan is the author of *Roman Britain: Life in an Imperial province*, 1983.
Robin Briggs is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.
Jorge Calado is Professor of Physical Chemistry at Cornell University.
Nicholas Cany is currently completing *From Reformation to Restoration: Ireland 1534-1660*.
Lord Carver is the author of *War Since 1945*, 1980.
John Clive's *Thomas Bobington Macculley: The shaping of the historian* was published in 1973.
A. O. J. Cockshut's books include *Truth to Life*, 1974.
Bernard Dixon is a former editor of *New Scientist*.
David Downson is co-editor of *London: Urban patterns, problems and policies*, 1973.
April FitzGibbon's *Lorenzo da Ponte: his life and his music* has recently been reissued as a paperback.
Ray Fuller's third volume of autobiography, *Home and Dry*, was published earlier this year.
John Guy's *The Public Career of Sir Thomas More* was published in 1980.
Rupert Hall is Emeritus Professor of the History of Science and Technology at the University of London.
Adrian Lyttelton is editor of *Italian Fascism: From Pareto to Gentile*, 1973.
Don Markwell is an Australian Rhodes Scholar at Trinity College, Oxford.
Dennis Nineham is Professor of Theology at the University of Bristol.
Geoffrey Parker is Professor of Early Modern History at the University of St Andrews.
Idris Parry's collection of essays, *Hand to Mouth*, was published in 1981.
B. W. Robinson is a former Keeper at the Victoria and Albert Museum.
A. G. Sherratt is an Assistant Keeper at the Ashmolean Museum.
Francis Spalding's biography, *Vernando Bull*, was published last year.
George Steiner's *Antigones* will be published next month.
Michael Stewart's most recent book is *Controlling the Economic Future*, 1983.
A. K. Thorpe edited *The Penguin Companion to Literature: Europe*, 1971.
Edward Thynn is a Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.
Brian Vickers is the editor of *Rhetoric Revivied*, 1982.
H. W. K. Wade is the author of *Constitutional Foundations*, 1980.
Christina Lerner is a lecturer in Music at Goldsmiths College, London.
H. A. Woodhouse is a lecturer in English at University College London.

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Paperbacks

Drama

SAMUEL BECKETT. *Collected Shorter Plays*. 316pp. Faber. £3.50. 0 571 13040 2. □ This collection provides a forceful reminder, in case one were needed, of the uncompromising singularity of Beckett's "dramatic" for stage, radio, film and television - the subtle transformation of technical means into imaginative ends, the texts' power "to claw" (as Beckett put it himself) individually and, taken together, to suggest the teasing symmetries and recapitulations of a remarkably consistent oeuvre: the "couples and pseudo-couples" that abound here, for example, telling stories and failing to speak to each other, or the way in which the plays have steadily illuminated areas of feeling and tapped linguistic resources that are closely entangled with the author's Irish birthright, and that have recently begun once more to bring a sombre beauty to a body of fiction that has for the most part managed to get itself written in French. In one volume at last are the not always easily available miniature masterpieces *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Endgame*, *Play*, *Come and Go*, *Footfalls*, *Not I* and *That Time*, as well as the leaner *Quad Without Words I and II*, the plays for Billie Whitelaw, *Footfalls* and *Rockaby*, the astonishingly economical *Casualty* and *Words and Music*, the more recent, sketchier *Ohio Impromptu* and *A Piece of Monologue*. Nothing is marginal. Twenty-seven years separate *All That Fall*, the first play printed here, from *What Where*, the last; though the former may seem, by comparison, of a positively Balzacian richness, the intervening texts are in fact magnificently undiminished in inventiveness, tact and (apart perhaps from the uncertain "Roughs" for theatre and radio) delicacy of touch.

A. J.

History

CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON (Editor). *A Radical Reader: The struggle for change in England, 1381-1914*. Penguin. £7.95. 0 1402 2444 0. □ The struggle - "for basic freedoms... both in fact and in law" - continues, insists Christopher Hampton in his introduction to this large assortment of radical documents, which, however, he chooses to end at the year of the outbreak of the First World War. He calls his new anthology a "gathering together [of] contemporary witnesses" to the struggle against oppression, and to that end it is a substantial monument, although readers are more likely to find it useful for reference than satisfying to read from beginning to end. It contains poems by Wyatt, Milton, Blake and others (including Burns, suitably, in this English anthology, threatening to leave "auld Scotland"), pamphlets, gobbels snatched from novels to illustrate a misery or two, and many bits and pieces by authors ranging from Wat Tyler to Charlie Chaplin. The book is prefaced by a chronology of the constituent ages but lacks a serviceable list of contents; and Mr Hampton, whose dedication to "the struggle" is not in doubt, must have agonized over the suitability of a few of the items, including the anonymous poem which contains the lines, "A woman is a worthy thing / They do the wash and do the wring."

J. C.

CHRISTINA LARNER. *Enemies of God: The Witch-hunt in Scotland*. 244pp. Basil Blackwell. £4.95. 0 631 13493 X. □ First published in 1981 and reviewed in the *TLS* of November 13 of that year. The reviewer wrote: "This is a scholarly, subtle and discriminating book... what it teaches us about Calvinism, in one of the few nations in which it captured the established church, is at least as interesting as what it teaches us about witchcraft."

Ross McKibbin. *The Evolution of the Labour Party 1910-1924*. 261pp. Oxford University Press. £6.95. 0 19821899 0. □ First published in 1974 and reviewed in the *TLS* of March 14, 1975. The reviewer wrote that the book "significantly advances understanding of some of the major strands of British twentieth-century politics. The scholarship is meticulous: only those who have also grappled with the immense archival resources of the Transport House Library can fully appreciate Ross McKibbin's skill and subtlety in producing a coherent account from the massive corres-

pondence files of the Labour Party's secretariat between 1910 and 1924. Further, the story is presented with insight, lucidity and sometimes with humour. This is, therefore, a wholly admirable addition to the Oxford Historical Monographs series and to recent literature on the British left, one which deserves wide acclaim."

Horticulture

ROY STRONG. *The Renaissance Garden*. 240pp. Thames and Hudson. £7.95. 0 500 27214 X. □ The formal garden is too often dismissed as dull and barren, but *The Renaissance Garden in England*, first published in 1970, should convince even those readers who will never acquire the taste that it exemplifies a fascinating combination of intellectual and princely preoccupations. Sir Roy Strong concentrates on the long period of peace from 1509 to 1642, which saw the building of so many fine houses - among them, Hampton Court, Nonsuch, Kenilworth and Wollaton. The design of palace and garden was conceived as a single architectural project, governed by Humanist ideals. These Tudor and Stuart gardens unfolded in a series of geometrically related spaces and vistas; terraces, steps, grottoes, mounts, knots, trellised arbours and summer houses would be linked by walks and waterworks - in the form of fountains, waterfalls, ponds - and, studded by topiary and statuary, the whole design was imbued with symbolic meaning, heraldic, emblematic and allegorical. This complex art form, destroyed by Capability Brown *et al*, was revived in an impoverished form in the last century.

A. P.

Humour

NOEL COWARD. *A Withered Nosegay: Three Cod Pieces*. 267pp. Methuen. £2.95. 0 413 54960 7. □ This anthology of three *jeux d'esprit* by Noel Coward has alas little more than curiosity value. The first item, *A Withered Nosegay* (reviewed in the *TLS* of June 8, 1922) was a youthful piece of nonsense, a collection of pen portraits of fictional women in history, accompanied by drawings by Lorn MacNaughton, based on alleged old masters; it is hard to say whether the drawn or the written evocations of characters such as Bianca di Pianto-Forti and Donna Isabella Angelica Y Bananas are the more numbingly inept. They are entirely overshadowed by later efforts in the genre of cod history by artists such as Oobert Lancaster, whose parody is based in a firm and affectionate knowledge of period and style. In *Chesley Buns* (*TLS* of June 11, 1925) Coward turned his parodic non-talents on Edith Sitwell, whose manner was anyway so idiosyncratic as to defy pointed or meaningful parody. The poems of "Hermia Whitebottle", perhaps recognizing this problem, are disarmingly unobservant of their subject and target; though Coward himself was quite carried away by his persecution of the Sitwells, his attacks, seen in retrospect, betray his silly conservatism, their derision for an avant-garde enemy unbrightened by the wit that might result from thought and insight. The parody anthology of modern poets reaches its nadir in *Spangled Unicorn* (*TLS* of December 29, 1932), which affords witless mockery of unrecognizable originals. The book is illustrated by a job lot of portraits from a photographer's studio, which Coward redeployed to represent his E. A. I. Maunders, Crispin Pether *et al*, thereby causing both anger and distress to their real subjects.

A. J. G. H.

JOHN WHARTON. *In Morocco*. 222pp. Century. £4.95. 0 7126 0347 6. □ First published by Jonathan Cape in 1920 (and reviewed in the *TLS* of October 7 that year) *In Morocco* is a fine example of book-compilations. Edith Wharton had two reasons for producing this book. She wanted to celebrate her overwhelming admiration for General Lyautey who successfully brought Morocco under the protection of France in 1912; and she was teased by the fact that there was no guide-book for the brave traveller. In September 1917 she and Walter Berry set off from France to tour Morocco, for three weeks enjoying all the benefits the French Government could bestow, which is to say almost every luxury denied the ordinary traveller. In such circumstances and with so brief an association with the country, Edith Wharton was hardly over-endowed with firsthand knowledge when she sat down to write. She depended a lot on the language of visual sensation: "As we drew nearer, the walls towered close over us, and skirting them, we came to a bare space outside a giant horseshoe gate, and found ourselves in the foreground of a picture by Carpaccio or Gentile Bellini." Then she added stout evidence of library work to expand these impressions. Then, she tackled on chapters about history, architecture, and of course General Lyautey's contribution to Morocco.

J. T.

SCHULTZ, Arthur. *Tagebuch 1913-1916*. 434. Schutts, Herbert. *The Prehistory of Germanic Europe*. 437.
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and chronic fatigue instead of facing up to a marked marital conflict". . . . There can be no doubt that Professor Szasz is a redoubtable fighter in the cause of civil liberty, particularly when it is threatened from the standpoint of the psychiatrist. He makes bold and sweeping forays into enemy country and is constantly on the alert. Such a watchdog is to be prized even though he leaves in his wake a fair amount of wreckage."

Travel

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON. *The Amateur Emigrant*. 138pp. Hogarth Press. £2.99. 0 7012 19122. □ The Hogarth Press, newly revived as a paperback reprint outfit, includes in its varied first list Stevenson's two-part narrative of the journey he made in 1879 from England to San Francisco. He travelled with poor emigrants from half the northern world - Russians, Chinese, Irish, Cornish (the only group he doesn't find sympathy with: "miners who kept grimly by themselves, one reading the New Testament all day long through steel spectacles, the rest discussing privately the secrets of their old-world, mysterious race. . . . I can make nothing of them at all. . . . Not even a Red Indian seems more foreign in my eyes". But if he was a fellow-traveller of emigrants, having no intention himself of settling in the States, he travelled in his own right as an inveterate amateur: he was going to California to marry Fanny Osbourne. In a fervent short introduction, Jonathan Raban makes much of Stevenson's becoming united with the other voyagers, suggesting, for example, that he travelled steege. But Stevenson is at pains to say on the very first page that he didn't: he chose to spend much of his time in the poorest quarter, but "I was not, in truth, a steege passenger. Although anxious to see the worst of emigrant life, I had some work to finish on the voyage, and was advised to go by second cabin, where at least I should have a table at command. The advice was excellent. . . . The point, surely, is that Stevenson's most sympathy with his companion subjects, here as in his other travel-writings and essays, came partly from his separatism. The travel-writer was a traveller, but he was also, and first, a writer. Getting him off-balance hero, and also in its surprisingly laborious account of the narrative's "symbolic structure", the introduction is misjudged, too, in praising *The Amateur Emigrant* at the expense of absolutely everything else Stevenson wrote. Raban is right that it is a marvellous book, "the best account ever written of the great European adventure in the nineteenth century, the passage to America, the New World". But the Hogarth Press would do well to ignore what he says about Stevenson's other books ("like images from a travel agent's brochure. . . over-coloured. . . whimsy. . . mannerism") and give us more - all? - of the rest.

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Timothy D'Arch Smith's *R. A. Caton and the Fortune Press* (92pp. Bertram Rota. £12.50. 0 854000 23 2) contains the memoir of Caton's life and character originally printed in the *TLS* (September 12, 1980) and adds to it a hand list of the 607 titles of books ascribable to the Fortune imprint under his direction. The list is intended as a guide to those who "wander into this intriguing bibliographical tangle".